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ABSTRACT

This is the first report of a longitudinal study of trainees preparing to teach in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools. The purpose of the study is to record attitudes and perceptions at the time of selection for teacher training at the end of 1988 and the response of a smaller sample of students halfway through the first year of the course in 1989. The study is planned to run until 1992 when most of the students will have become beginning teachers. The study is being undertaken in three colleges: Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, and conducted in several phases. Data have been collected by means of a questionnaire to successful college applicants followed by more intensive investigation of a sample of the students through interviews and college records of performance. The report focuses on expectations, personal backgrounds, attitudes towards public service as future teachers, as well as thoughts on leading issues of the day such as gender and cultural equity. Future reports will document students' progress through teacher training and out into the classrooms with an eye towards helping inform individual colleges of ways education programs might be improved to enhance the student's experience. (LL)

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WINDOWS ON TEACHER EDUCATION

STUDENT PROGRESS THROUGH COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

PHASE 1: INITIATION INTO TEACHER EDUCATION

Margery Renwick
June Vize

New Zealand Council for Educational Research
1990

New Zealand Council for Educational Research
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Wellington
New Zealand

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PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE: 1989

Ministry of Education:	Neil Scotts
	Hans Wagemaker
	Bill Richardson
	Diane Mara
Auckland College of Education:	Garry Arnott
	Marie Cameron
Wellington College of Education:	Barry Doyle
	Kathryn Jenkins (a student at the college)
Christchurch College of Education:	Roger Murdoch
NZCER	Cedric Croft (Chairperson)

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EDITED BY: Anna Rogers

APPENDICES

Further technical information related to the research project is included in *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*. Copies are available for purchase from NZCER.

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1. The Department of Education became the Ministry of Education on 1 October 1989. We refer to both in this document, according to which is appropriate in the context of the discussion.

INTRODUCTION

This is the first report of a longitudinal study of trainees preparing to teach in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools. It records their attitudes and perceptions at the time of their selection for teacher training at the end of 1988 and the responses of a smaller sample of students halfway through the first year of their course in 1989. The study is planned to run until 1992 when most of the students will have become beginning teachers. Future reports will document their later experiences of teacher training and their initial experience as teachers.

The study is being undertaken in three colleges: Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, and conducted in several phases. Data have been collected by means of a postal questionnaire to successful college applicants followed by more intensive investigation of a sample of the students through student interviews and college records of student performance.

This report focuses on the perceptions and expectations of the students themselves: their personal backgrounds, their thoughts about teaching as a public function and themselves as future teachers, and their thoughts on some leading issues which are the subject of much public discussion at present - issues of equity for both genders and for people of different cultural and social backgrounds, of biculturalism and multiculturalism, and of honouring the Treaty of Waitangi.

The study thus begins by acknowledging that teaching and, therefore, teacher training, takes place in a context of ideas, expectations and arguments of which teachers should be aware and to which they must develop professional answers. One of its main themes will be to chart the understandings the students in our cohort have of these issues, the attitudes they bring with them to their course of training, the views they encounter at

college, how they respond to them, and the extent to which their initial views are confirmed, challenged, strengthened or changed during their course of training.

A longitudinal study has the potential to record changes in the perceptions and understandings of our cohort over time - in this case two and a half or three and a half years. By so doing it may provide a firmer research base for the discussion of the larger policy questions about the effectiveness of courses of teacher education. Previous research studies in this country have for the most part been retrospective studies of groups of students from the college where the investigation has taken place. Much the same, apparently, can be said of similar research studies in Australia. Tisher (1987)[2] has commented on the lack of national and longitudinal studies. He emphasises the need for research that will 'study the process of teacher education as it unfolds over time for those involved in it'.

Not only have most previous studies been retrospective, they have usually been conducted by investigators who are members of the staff of the college whose course is being reviewed. This study is being undertaken with the co-operation of the colleges but by researchers who are not formally associated with any of them. Its focus of interest differs from that of previous research in an important respect: the research study is proceeding in step with the students whose perceptions are being documented and interpreted. Information can be fed back to the principals and staff which they can consider in relation to students who are still in the college.

It is too soon to comment on the implications of the study for national policy, although the results are expected to have policy implications for the Ministry of Education and should help inform individual colleges of ways programmes might be modified to enhance the experience of students. Some issues are beginning to emerge and these are discussed in the concluding chapter of this report.

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2. Tisher, R.P. (1987) A decade of research on teacher education in Australia, p. 29.

AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aims of the study are:

1. To record the progress of a sample of students through their training and out into the classroom.

2. To establish those factors which contribute to variations in student progress through their course of training.

3. To isolate 'key events' in a student's experience which influence their later progress as a student and teacher.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES FOR PHASE 1

1. To collect data about the experience students bring to their course of training, and their attitudes towards selected educational and social issues.

2. To record and analyse students' perceptions of their initiation to their course of teacher education.

3. To discuss the 'key events' in a student's early experience of their course of teacher education which are likely to influence their later progress as a student and teacher.

4. To document the performance of a sample of students during the early stages of their course of teacher education in terms of the assessments the colleges themselves make.

5. To isolate those factors which appear in the early stages of training to contribute towards variations in student performance.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Two theoretical assumptions have underlined our research approach. The first is that the process of teacher education is embedded in more general issues of learning and teaching in schools, which in turn are affected by social forces outside the schools. Any study of teacher education must therefore be set in a framework which 'integrates the aspects of context, input, process and product'.[3]

Secondly, we recognise that the experiences students bring to the college are key influences on their later development as students and teachers. Our starting point, therefore, is the students at the point at which they were accepted for teacher training at the end of 1988. We are interested in their views of themselves at that time in relation to their future teaching role. We assume that the meanings students give to these role attributes constitute their sense of reality - of the way the world of the teacher is or ought to be. In this we are using a symbolic interactionist approach.[4]

The research will highlight the amount of agreement there is among students and between students and their college lecturers on the various issues to be studied. By returning to our sample annually for three (in the case of graduates) or four years, we will be able to record changes in the degree of agreement and disagreement among students, between students and staff, and among the students when they are beginning teachers.

We are using a 'grounded theory' approach to generate our own understandings of the data our research will generate. The research is designed so that we can be assisted in our understanding of the data through interviews with a sample of the student cohort, opportunities for discussion with our co-researchers and lecturers at the colleges concerned, and meetings of the advisory committee.

The research is a study in the professional socialisation of teacher trainees. We see this as a process of interaction taking place over three to four years. The key factors influencing that process we take to be:

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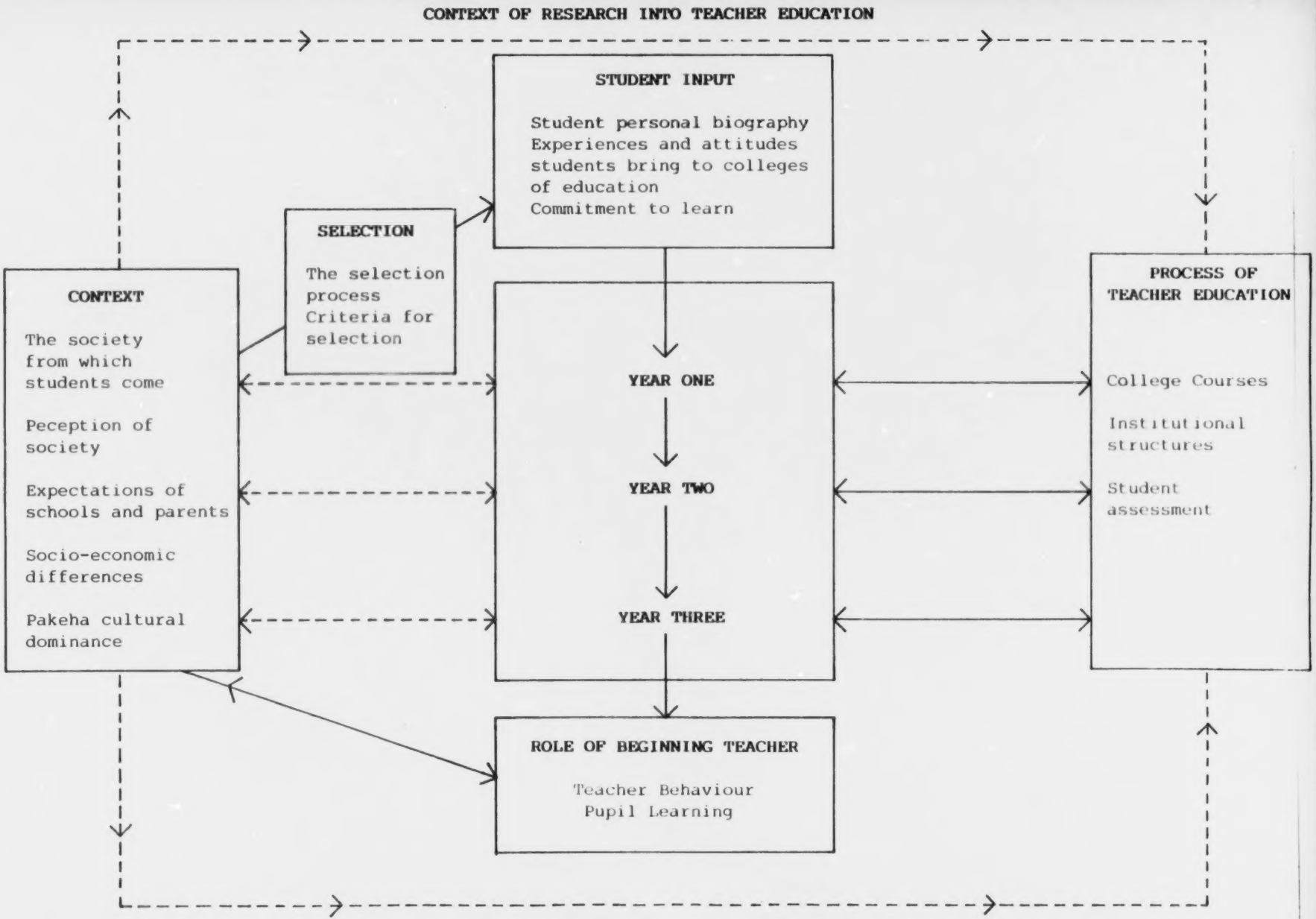
3. See *Report of the National Inquiry into Teacher Education* (1980). Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, p. 215.

4. See, for example, Kuper, A. and Kuper, J. (eds.) (1985), The social science encyclopadia. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p. 508.


CONTEXT OF RESEARCH INTO TEACHER EDUCATION
STUDENT INPUT
Student personal biography
Experiences and attitudes students bring to colleges of education
Commitment to learn
SELECTION
The selection process
Criteria for selection
CONTEXT
The society from which students come
Peception of society
Expectations of schools and parents
Socio-economic differences
Pakeha cultural dominance
YEAR ONE
YEAR TWO
YEAR THREE
PROCESS OF TEACHER EDUCATION
College Courses
Institutional structures
Student assessment
ROLE OF BEGINNING TEACHER
Teacher Behaviour
Pupil Learning

* The perceptions which trainers and trainees have of the society for which the formal education system is to play its part in preparing children;
* The biographies of the trainees and the views they have of the role of teachers at the time of their selection;
* The messages which college courses set out to convey to students and the meanings they come to have for them.

The study will end with our attempt to assess the impact of these interactions on the students in our sample when they become first year teachers.

These interactions through time can be represented diagrammatically as in Diagram 1.

STUDENT PROFILES

When research data are analysed according to questions asked of respondents it is easy to lose sight of the individuals who make up a study. We have included in this report a series of student profiles in order to give a more rounded view of individual students. We selected students from the three colleges in the study although individual colleges are not identified, and included both male and female students from different ethnic backgrounds. These are the reactions of individual students and cannot be regarded as representative of the views and experiences of the whole group.

RELEVANT LITERATURE AND RELATED RESEARCH

This is a preliminary report of a longitudinal study. Our reading of the literature has not found similar studies although there are a number of useful reports related to student selection; equity of access to tertiary education; the personal biography of students and student commitment to teach; and earlier studies on college courses. (These are summarised in *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 1.)

COLLEGE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The aims and objectives which the colleges themselves set for teacher education will be important statements against which to describe and measure the experience of students and track their progress through their training. So far we have asked students in our interview sample to indicate how well they think the college is addressing its own aims and objectives. As the students were only six months into their training when we interviewed them it is too early to comment on the student responses.

According to their college calendars, the aims and objectives of the three colleges in our study are:

Auckland

The aim of the School of Primary and Early Childhood Education is to create the conditions that will foster the growth of course members as educated professional people with informed and sensitive attitudes towards society.

Stated very briefly, the purposes of the School are to promote:

* the continued development of scholarship involving both the intellect and imagination;

* the continued growth of personal qualities, especially those of sensitivity, enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility towards others;

* the acquisition of knowledge and skills and experiences of value to the professions the school serves;

* the recognition that education is a lifelong process.

The college promotes the achievement of these goals through the provision of academic and practical courses, educational and care-giving experiences, and a wide range of additional activities offering development.

The common concern is to provide students with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable them to be secure and confident in the initial years after graduating, and with the flexibility that will allow for their further growth in their profession.

Wellington

Teacher education is a process which starts with the College of Education course and continues throughout the teacher's career. The objectives of the College of Education course include:

1. The continued development of scholarship involving both the intellect and the imagination.

2. The continued development of personal qualities, especially those of sensitivity, enthusiasm and a sense of the teacher's responsibility towards society.

3. The development of an understanding of the history and purpose of education.

4. The promotion of an understanding of children, their growth and how they learn.

5. The development of an understanding of school curricula.

6. The development of teaching and class management skills.

It is essential that the staff become assured that each trainee has achieved each of these objectives satisfactorily. The ultimate responsibility of the college is towards children. The common concern of the staff is to provide trainees with enough security to face their first year of teaching confidently, and also with the flexibility necessary for their further growth as teachers.

Christchurch

The mission of Christchurch Teachers College is to produce teachers of the highest quality who are enthusiastic about learning, confident in their own knowledge and ability, skilled in communicating, capable of establishing a climate for learning that is challenging, stimulating and enjoyable, and able to show the students that they like them, accept them with all their differences and value every person for what they are.

The college will provide pre-service programmes and experiences which ensure that trainees:

1. Understand and apply the principles of learning, teaching and effective human relationships.

2. Experience a wide range of teaching styles and strategies and demonstrate skills appropriately.

3. Know and implement appropriate curriculum areas.

4. Understand the national guidelines and principles of curriculum.

5. Extend their academic education.

6. Become sensitive to, and value the diversity of, cultural backgrounds of the learners.

7. Acknowledge and practise the principles of equity.

8. Use library systems, educational technology and resources effectively.

9. Have the opportunity to develop a range of personal interests.

10. Develop a sense of professional and corporate identity.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

(These generalisations are based on the answers given to a questionnaire completed by 549 students who had been accepted for admission to Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch Colleges of Education in 1989 and interviews of 107 of these students six months into the college course.)

A. PRIOR TO ENTRY

* By far the most important reason for students wanting to teach was their enjoyment of children and a desire to work with them.

* Students entering training were likely to think that they already possess most of the personal qualities and abilities necessary to make a good primary teacher.

* More than two-thirds of the students expected to make a lifelong career in education although only about a half regarded primary teaching as their first choice of a career.

* Students were more likely to get their information about the college from friends who were already teachers than from any other source.

* The main impression of each of the colleges formed by prospective students was that there would be a wide range of courses offered. This was particularly the case in Wellington.

* Prospective students were unlikely to have read much in the way of books or articles on educational topics.

* Prospective students were inclined to believe that children succeed at school because of the skills of teachers and fail at school because of problems at home.

* Prospective students were almost equally divided as to the age group of children within primary schools they would like to teach.

* The four subjects students were most looking forward to teaching were: physical education, reading, social studies and art.

* The subjects students were least looking forward to teaching were: mathematics, computer studies, science and music.

* Nearly all students recognised that they had specific weaknesses or 'skills that needed developing'. The subject areas where this was most common were mathematics, Maori language and culture, computer studies and music.

* Before they entered college, the biggest problem envisaged by most students was finances for daily needs.

B. SIX MONTHS INTO THE COLLEGE COURSE

* Overall, students at all colleges were more likely to make positive than negative comments about their experiences at college so far, particularly in Auckland and Wellington.

* Most students found the colleges to be friendly, supportive institutions, particularly when compared with the university.

* More than half of the Christchurch students but fewer than 30% of those from Auckland and Wellington were taking a university course.

* Compared to Wellington students the Auckland and Christchurch students enrolled at university were more inclined to be taking courses simply to improve their qualifications without necessarily being interested in the course content.

* Students not enrolled at the university usually felt they did not have sufficient time to take on extra study and wanted to settle into college first.

* Many students found the college courses less challenging than 7th form courses and, for those also undertaking university study, certainly less demanding and rigorous than university courses.

* Students at all colleges had particularly favourable comments to make about teaching practice sections and wanted more practical experience.

* Within the college only about half the students at Auckland and Wellington and considerably fewer in Christchurch, considered that they were treated as individuals.

* However, most students considered that the skills and abilities they brought into college were recognised and used.

* Criticisms of the college tended to focus on courses which students thought were badly organised and taught, or to a feeling that students were treated like school children.

* Students in Wellington were most likely to think that something was being done about the weaknesses they had when they entered college (about two-thirds compared with half in the other two colleges).

* Some common student reactions to assessment within the college were:
  - courses were too easy to pass and standards not high enough;
  - not enough credit was given for time and effort spent on assignments, and the categories used for marking were too broad;
  - students found it difficult to know how they were doing - they wanted more constructive criticism;
  - inconsistency in marking between subjects;
  - visiting lecturers, for teaching practice, spent too little time with each student and too much emphasis was put on lecturers' reports.

* Fewer students than anticipated were involved in sporting and cultural activities at the college, partly because there were relatively few clubs operating.

* Fewer students than anticipated were working outside the college. A high proportion of students were coping financially because of the support of parents.

METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION

For reasons of limited time and resources, we decided to work in three of the six colleges of education: Auckland, because it is a major metropolitan area with a large concentration of Maori and Pacific Island residents;[5] Wellington, because the college is easily accessible to the researchers; and Christchurch, because it is situated in the South Island. The population covered by the study is all students selected for training as primary teachers at the three colleges who began their training in February 1989. The cohort includes graduate trainees undertaking a shortened two-year period of training and those entering for the normal three-year course of training, some of whom may go on to study for a degree (BA/BSc or BEd) in conjunction with their training, which will take them four years to complete. Pacific Island Trainees[6] are not included in the study.

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5. About 24% of the population of Maori origin or descent, resident in New Zealand, live in the Auckland local government region; 65% of the population of Pacific Island origin or descent are resident in the Auckland local government region.

6. Pacific Island Trainees are teachers trained in the Pacific Islands, now resident in New Zealand, who choose to undertake a further two years of training which will enable them to teach in New Zealand schools.

THE POSTAL QUESTIONNAIRE (See *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 2)

We surveyed by postal questionnaire the total cohort of students *before* they arrived at college because we believed that the background of students and the experiences and attitudes they brought to college would be important factors in determining their reaction to the college course. (Students who were offered places after the college starting date were excluded from the study as were students who completed questionnaires but did not take up a place at one of the colleges.) Students were asked in a covering letter to fill in the questionnaires *before* they arrived at college where the questionnaires were collected during the first week of term. The response rate to the questionnaire over all three colleges was 81% with variations by college (Auckland 75%, N = 251; Wellington 80%, N = 142; Christchurch 92%, N = 156). The overall number of students who responded was 549.

Purpose of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to:

1. Provide a picture of students entering the three colleges in terms of
   - a basic demographic profile;
   - the experiences they bring to college;
   - the attitudes they have towards their training and expectations of the college course;
   - their views on learning and teaching;
   - their views on equity issues.

2. Provide data based on the total cohort of students from three colleges which will inform the direction of the research study in the future.

THE INTERVIEWS

THE SAMPLE

We later interviewed a sample of students to collect in-depth qualitative data on their reaction to the college course. We initially decided to interview a sample of 100 students over the three colleges based upon the proportion of

questionnaire returns from each college. We later increased the number of students interviewed in Wellington and Christchurch so that staff at these colleges would consider the sample size large enough for meaningful comment (Auckland 41, Wellington 34, Christchurch 32)

We selected at random the required number of students in each college and then checked to see whether there was a valid representation of students at each college by age, ethnicity, gender and graduate status. Where any of these were under-represented appropriate students were substituted from a randomly drawn reserve list. Although the sample, selected on a random basis, is representative of the cohort as a whole, we do not have sufficiently large numbers in sub-groups, for example graduates or Maori students, to draw conclusions about them.

We attempted to standardise the interview process across colleges by interviewing students at a comparable stage of their course, that is after they had been at college for approximately six months and after they had all had one teaching practice.

The Interview Schedule (See *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 3)

The interview schedule was designed to collect information about

- initial student reaction to college
- the college course
- assessment
- university study
- reaction of graduate students
- professional development
- time commitments
- finances
- induction
- equity issues.

CONSULTATION WITH THE COLLEGES

From the outset we have attempted to work collaboratively with staff and students, with the co-researchers at each college acting as co-ordinators. Before preparing the initial questionnaire, we spent two days at each of the colleges in the third term of 1988, observing the college programmes and

talking with staff and students about the issues they thought would be important in a longitudinal study of teacher education. We later visited each of the colleges in 1989 during orientation programmes and talked with student groups about the ongoing phases of the study. Report back sessions have been held at each of the colleges although it has been difficult to fit these into the complex and busy college schedules. Among the most successful were a report back session to students in Christchurch where virtually the total cohort of students were present as part of their professional studies programme, and a session with the staff of the Wellington College of Education where researchers presented and discussed research findings at the beginning of the three-day staff review of the primary training programme. All written material has been sent to the colleges for comment before being released publicly. All colleges cite examples of small changes to the college programme because of findings from the study and certainly acknowledge that research findings have confirmed or strengthened arguments for change.

STUDENTS' BACKGROUND AND THE SELECTION PROCESS

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

HOW DO STUDENTS IN OUR STUDY COMPARE WITH PRIMARY TEACHER TRAINEES OVER NEW ZEALAND AS A WHOLE?

The most up-to-date national data on entrants to teacher training is published in *Profile of New Entrants to Teacher Training in 1987*.[7] This publication indicates changing trends in the characteristics of entrants to teacher training. Our respondents are in most respects typical of those entering primary training in recent years, although there are differences, particularly when the data are looked at separately for each college.

Gender

Since 1984 the proportion of female trainees entering primary training has remained around 80%, varying only 1% or 2% to either side. Our cohort, with 81% female and 19% male trainees, is comparable to those of previous years. There is some variation in the proportions of female trainees by college (Auckland 84%, Wellington 75%, and Christchurch 81%).

Age

From 1980 up until 1986 over three-quarters of entrants to primary training

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7. Published in 1988 by the New Zealand Department of Education, Research and Statistics Division.

were under 20 years of age, many of them straight from school.[8] In 1986 there was a change in the recruitment emphasis for the 1987 intake which concentrated on trying to attract more applicants from ethnic minority groups and lower socio-economic status groups. In addition there was a reduction in the minimum entry requirement fo applicants under 20 years of age and those aged 20 years and over required no formal qualification. Between 1986 and 1987 there was a marked change in the age structure of new entrants to primary teacher training. Compared with 76% of new entrants under 20 years of age in 1986, there were only 63% in 1987.

Table 1 compares the 1987 data, by college and overall, with data from our study. Some caution needs to be taken in comparing these figures. The national data for 1987 are taken over all six colleges, whereas the figures from our study are only for three colleges. Nevertheless, it seems that the age composition of new entrants is continuing to change with a further reduction in the proportion of students under 20 years of age.

Table 1

A comparison of the proportions of new entrants to primary teacher training, by age and by college

Age group	Auckland		Wellington		Christchurch		All*	
	1987 %	1989 %	1987 %	1989 %	1987 %	1989 %	1987 %	1989 %
Under 20 years	53	56	43	42	70	58	63	53
20 - 29	25	29	36	38	24	27	24	31
30 and over	22	15	21	20	6	15	13	16

* Data for 1987 are taken over the six NZ colleges; data from 1989 are aggregated only for the three colleges in the study.

Table 1 shows the variation in age composition of new entrants at each college, with Wellington in particular having a much smaller proportion of its intake aged under 20 years than the other two colleges. Auckland, against the overall trend, has a slightly greater proportion of students under 20 years in 1989 than in 1987. Christchurch contributes most to the overall reduction, with a decrease of 12% in the proportion of students under 20 years of age entering the college over this period.

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8. See *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 5, Table A1.

Socio-Economic Status[9]

The occupations of the fathers of the students in our cohort were classified according to the Elley-Irving socio-economic classification.[10] The pattern confirms the findings of other commentators that the primary trainee population is over-represented by entrants from socio-economic groups 1 and 2 and under-represented by entrants from socio-economic groups 3-6.

The occupations of the students' mothers were classified according to the Irving-Elley scale for the female labour force[11] and, show an over-representation of entrants from socio-economic groups 1, 2 and 3. Group 2 in particular is over twice as likely to be represented. This can probably be explained by the fact that primary teachers (SES2) were the largest single occupation of the mothers of students in our cohort. (See Table 2).

Table 2

Most common occupations of students' parents

Occupation	Father N	Occupation	Mother N
Builder	20	Primary teacher	39
Engineer	18	Clerk	32
Managing director	17	Nurse (general)	32
Carpenter	15	Secretary typist	23
Farmer	15	Secondary teacher	20
Sales representative	13	Cleaner/home help	18
Teacher (secondary)	13	Shop assistant	16
Manager (factory production)	11	Receptionist	14
Electrician	10	Sewing machinist	14
		Accounts clerk	11
		Nurse aid	10

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9. See *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 5, Tables A2 and A3.

10. Elley, W.B. and Irving, J.C. The Elley-Irving socio-economic Index: 1981 Census Revision. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies, 20*, 1985, 115-128.

11. Irving, J.C. and Elley W.B. A socio-economic index for the female labour force in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies, 12*, 1977, 154-163.

The mothers of 171 students were trained for occupations other than those they are currently engaged in. If the proportion employed is an indication of the proportions trained, then again more of the students' mothers are trained for occupations at SES levels 1, 2 and 3, than would be expected.

Ethnicity

According to departmental figures, the percentage of Maori entering a primary teacher's college course in 1987, was almost double that of 1986 (12% for 1987, 7% in 1986). There was a smaller increase in the percentage of students of Pacific Island descent (4% in 1986, 6% in 1987). The departmental analysis shows that whereas the percentage of Pacific Island students entering teacher training in 1987, both primary and secondary, equates closely with the percentage (5%) of Pacific Islanders aged 5-14 years at the 1986 census, the percentage of new entrants of Maori descent is still 7% below the percentage (19%) of Maori students in the school-aged population.

Table 3 shows the ethnic composition of respondents to our questionnaire.

Table 3

Ethnicity of students, by college attended

Ethnic group	Auckland N	Auckland %	Wellington N	Wellington %	Christchurch N	Christchurch %	All N	All %
Pakeha/European	176	70	105	74	145	93	426	78
Maori	21	8	17	12	3	2	41	8
Maori + other	28	11	11	8	4	3	43	8
Pacific Islander	12	5	2	1	1	1	15	3
Pacific Islander + other	4	2	2	1	1	1	7	1
Other	10	4	5	4	2	1	17	3
Total	251	100	142	100	156	101	549	100

If we take the category of 'Maori' and 'Maori + other' to indicate the number of Maori students entering primary teacher training at the three colleges in 1989, the proportion (15%) is slightly higher than the comparable

1987 and 1988 departmental figures of 12% Maori new entrants over all six colleges. However the breakdown by the three colleges shows that the intakes have a very different ethnic makeup and it could be that our figures are not a genuine indication of an increase in the number of Maori students entering primary training in the six colleges overall. Both Auckland and Wellington have higher than average proportions of Maori students (19% in Auckland and 20% in Wellington, with Christchurch much lower with 5%).[12]

OTHER BACKGROUND VARIABLES AND EXPERIENCES

STUDENTS WHO ARE PARENTS

Approximately 20% (114 students) of the intake over the three colleges are parents. Almost all of them (94%) felt that their experience as parents would be beneficial in the classroom.

The two areas where most parents thought their experiences would be beneficial were:

* in giving them an awareness of children's needs, both emotional and intellectual and of the way these needs varied at different stages of development;

* in developing skills such as listening, patience and self-awareness which would help in their relationships with other children;

Other areas mentioned were:

* a greater understanding of effective discipline procedures in particular the recognition of the importance of praise and approval;

* being in touch with children's interests and activities;

* a better idea of what was important in educating children through their involvement with the school system;

* a greater empathy with parents.

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12. The Ministry of Education expects each college to meet certain target figures in its recruitment of Pacific Island and Maori trainees. The targets vary from college to college.

Although almost all the student-parents were convinced of the value of their parenting experience for teaching, only half thought that the experience would be acknowledged in the training course.

The most common way in which they saw their experience being drawn upon in the course was in being able to provide practical examples to illustrate discussions in the class. However some parents were wary of appearing to 'know it all', as they felt this would have a detrimental effect on their relationship with other students.

A few students hoped that the demands of parenting would be acknowledged and allowed for on the course. As one parent wrote:

> 'I would expect some of the difficulties of combining motherhood and teacher training to be acknowledged.'

PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE

Students were asked what previous work experiences they thought would help them as a teacher. Pre-school and school experiences were the most frequently mentioned (21% of responses). The other most common jobs mentioned were shop assistant (15%), sports and cultural activities such as dance or Yoga teacher (12%), babysitting (12%) and office work (11%). Not surprisingly students thought work experience useful mainly because of the experience gained in dealing with other people - children and adults.

PREVIOUS SCHOOL, RECREATIONAL AND/OR FAMILY EXPERIENCES

Students were asked to list any such experiences which they considered would contribute to their skill as a teacher and the reasons why they thought them relevant. Students most often mentioned their involvement in sports and cultural activities, their experience of family life, their own years at school and teaching experience through Sunday schools, youth groups etc. They believed the experiences helped them develop organisational skills and provided the opportunity for direct contact with children.

EDUCATIONAL BOOKS, ARTICLES, FILMS, VIDEOS AND TELEVISION

We asked the students to list any books or articles on educational topics they had read during the 12 months before entering college. We also asked about films, videos and television programmes which they had viewed over the same

period of time. This was partly to find out whether prospective students' interest in education was reflected in their reading and viewing. We also wondered if such reading and viewing would indicate books and/or media programmes which might have helped to shape student attitudes. (For a complete list of books, films and TV programmes see *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 6a and 6b).

COMMENTS ABOUT BOOKS AND AUDIOVISUAL MATERIAL[13]

* Overall, students claimed to have read a wide range of books and articles - more than 250 different titles.

* Relatively few books or articles were read by more than one student - only about 30. Of these most were read by two or three students only. The exception was Dorothy Butler's *Five to Eight*, read by 11 students.

* Students interpreted books on educational topics very broadly. The educational significance of some titles was not immediately apparent.

* There was a high proportion of New Zealand writers and titles.

* Students who had already attended university tended to refer to university texts.

* By comparison with the books, students referred to a narrower range of films, video and TV programmes. By far the most popular is *Our World*, referred to by 34 students.

* A high percentage of students said they had not read any books on educational topics - between 40-48%. There was little variation between colleges.

* Sixty percent or more students said they had not watched films, TV programmes or videos on educational topics.

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13. See also *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 5, Tables A4 and A5.

INTERVIEWS FOR SELECTION

Two issues related to the selection of students for teacher education courses were considered. Firstly, students were asked their views on the qualities and abilities which interviewing panels look for in prospective students. Secondly, we collected some information about marae interviews.

THE QUALITIES AND ABILITIES OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Prospective students were asked to list up to six qualities and abilities they thought the members of the interviewing panel were looking for. Table 4 summarises the students' responses.

Table 4

The qualities and abilities students think the interviewing panel were looking for at the selection interview

Qualities and abilities	N	%
Personal qualities	635	44
Communication skills	235	16
Wide experience/involvement	133	9
Children - experience, liking, involvement, ability to relate to	80	6
Bi/multiculturalism - commitment to, sympathy with, knowledge of, experience of (especially Maori and Pacific Island culture)	76	5
Commitment to teaching/education as a profession	72	5
Academic attainment/intelligence	53	4
Social and political awareness	42	3
Other	127	8
All responses	1,453	100

NOTE: This question was coded for half of the respondents (275) randomly selected. Multiple responses were allowed.

Students clearly believed that the selection panel was most interested in the personal skills and abilities they would bring to the course. The

student view mirrors the guidelines laid out for selection panels interviewing prospective trainees[14] which state that panels are asked to consider:

* the personal qualities, both covert and overt, a student brings to the course;

* their communication skills;

* their involvement in cultural, sporting, social and welfare activities.

It is not the purpose of our study to examine the selection criteria used for Division A trainees as that has been done elsewhere (Batchelor, 1986). Our study is interested in the implications for training courses of the students' belief that, when entering college, they already possessed those qualities and abilities which make a good teacher.

MARAE INTERVIEWS

In the past the practice in all Education Board districts was for applicants to teacher training to be interviewed individually by a panel of selectors at Education Board offices or some similar location. In 1988, however, some applicants had the opportunity to be interviewed on a marae or could bring support persons to the interview. We were interested to find out what proportion of applicants were given these opportunities and how many availed themselves of them.

Overall, 80 (15%) of the students said they had been given the choice of being interviewed for selection on a marae. (By college the percentages were: Auckland 19%, Wellington 20%, Christchurch 6%). These percentages equate exactly with the percentage of students who described themselves as Maori or Maori/Pakeha.

Of the students who were given the choice of being interviewed on a marae, 37 (41%) chose to do so. There were variations by college. In Auckland, students who were given the choice were most likely to be

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14. See Department of Education. *Administration manual, part C, Teachers, vol. 1; Chapter 9, Training and certification of teachers* (para's C9.14.4)

interviewed on a marae (56%); in Wellington the figure was less than a third (32%); and in Christchurch although only eight students (5%) had had the opportunity, none took it.

* Those students who had been interviewed on a marae and added a comment usually said it was because they felt comfortable and relaxed on a marae.

* Those students who had *not* accepted the invitation to be interviewed on a marae usually said it was because they felt uncomfortable on a marae as they were unfamiliar with Maori protocol. Some of these added that they were not Maori.

* Thirteen students said they did not have a choice as a letter was sent telling them to go to the marae. One of these added that she thought it was 'rude' that Pakeha people were not given the option of being interviewed on a marae.

SUPPORT PERSONS

Students who were *not* interviewed on a marae were asked if they were invited to have a support person/s with them at the interview. Overall the students divided almost evenly with 52% saying they did have the chance, and 48% that they did not. The colleges varied considerably in this regard. Only 11 of the 208 Auckland students (5%) said they were offered the chance of bringing a support person. This figure compared with 124 of the 132 students in Wellington (94%) and 123 of the 154 students in Christchurch (80%).

Overall, only 26 students took a support person. Of these 5 were in Auckland, 11 in Wellington and 10 in Christchurch. The overwhelming reason given for *not* wanting to take a support person was that the student, 'Wanted to succeed in the interview without moral support and felt it was unnecessary'. Twelve students thought that to take a support person would jeopardise their chances of being a successful candidate.

STUDENT PROFILE 1

Mary is an 18 year old school leaver. She is Pakeha and attended a state single sex school. She intends to undertake the four-year BEd course. Mary's father is a chemist and her mother is a shop assistant who has also trained as a nurse. Before enrolling at college Mary has done a good deal of babysitting which she believes has helped her to understand, co-operate with and control children.

While she was at school she worked as a photographer's assistant and she thinks this experience will help her with the public relations skills needed for teaching. She also had three days' work experience at a primary school. This helped her to decide on the age group of children she would like to teach. She also had a community awareness course at a kindergarten which gave her closer contact with younger children and helped her to understand children's play. She has one brother and has also enjoyed mixing with younger cousins.

Primary teaching is Mary's first choice of career. She has wanted to teach for as long as she can remember. Apart from possible breaks for travel or family reasons, she expects to make a lifelong career in education.

Mary got her information about the College of Education from the school and university careers advisers, the teaching recruitment officer and TV and newspaper advertisements. When she was interviewed for selection she could have brought a support person with her, but chose not to do this because she did not think it necessary. She thought the interviewing panel was looking for people with well-rounded skills and qualifications who had had experience with children, could relate to and communicate with, both adults and children and were neat and tidy in their appearance. She herself thinks that the most important qualities and abilities for a primary school teacher are: patience, control, understanding, organisation, originality and the ability to make learning fun. She believes she has all these qualities and abilities.

Before coming to college Mary had read a few newspaper articles on school reform and had looked at the Picot Report. She has seen numerous TV programmes and films on educational topics but can't recall the titles. She has formed the impression that the college will provide a well-rounded course covering a great variety of topics. She is particularly looking forward to the intellectual stimulation and the teaching practice. She is pleased to have the chance to continue her own education and to be responsible for organising her own time. She is looking forward to making new friends and hopes to take part in drama productions at the college. Mary doesn't expect

too many problems while she is training but is concerned about finances for daily needs. She wonders if she will be able to understand the educational theory and, because of shyness, is a little concerned about teaching practice sections, particularly her confidence in front of a class. The subjects she is most looking forward to are reading, maths and drama. She is least looking forward to art and health. Mary feels she may need extra help with Maori culture and language as she has had virtually no contact with Maori language.

Mary's preference is to teach 8- to 10-year-olds. When she drew a picture of herself in the classroom the children were in reading groups either reading to Mary as teacher, or on the listening post, or practising a play. Mary thinks children learn best in a bright and stimulating atmosphere when they are interested in what they are doing and they have an understanding teacher to whom they can relate. She thinks the main reason children fail is because they do not have the ability to concentrate and they are not interested in what they are doing. As a teacher she hopes to stimulate the children in her class to want to learn. She hopes the pressure of a large class won't prevent her from helping individual children and that she will be able to cater for all the different levels of ability in her class.

In terms of broader educational and social issues, Mary thinks the school reforms will mean that there will be more competition for jobs and her own job will not be guaranteed. She does not think the Treaty of Waitangi will have any influence on her or her teaching. She thinks New Zealand is already a bicultural society although it is the home of many cultures. She thinks we are fortunate to be living in racial harmony in a society of which we can be proud. However, Mary also hopes that in the year 2000 New Zealand will be even more culturally aware and able to cope with many different races and lifestyles. There will need to be an increased awareness of the need for Education. The greatest challenge facing New Zealand schools is smaller classes.

Six months into the college course Mary is enjoying college, although it wasn't until she got out into schools that she found the course really valuable and practical. She thinks some of the lecturers rely on things that are no longer used or are not practical when you're out on section. She also had some problems with assignments on section when the relevant material hadn't been covered in college, for example, in maths.

Most of the college subjects are compulsory, with which Mary agrees. She has chosen health as an option which she thinks has been really beneficial. Things like first aid she will find helpful in the classroom, but other topics covered are of general interest to anyone. She has been

particularly interested in the information about asthma, diabetes and epilepsy. Mary is quite satisfied with the way subjects have been assessed and agrees with most of the marks she has received. She is doing two education papers at university. She found the information she had at the beginning of the year about university work inadequate and confusing. She doesn't think there is much interaction between the university and the college and some of the work is covered at both institutions. The university work is definitely more demanding but there is much less personal contact at the university which she regards as more rigid and cold than the teachers college. Overall she finds college more enjoyable than university.

She thinks that college lecturers overall know her quite well and that students are treated as individuals although it depends a good deal on individual lecturers and the options students choose to take.

Mary says the combination of university and college doesn't leave her much time for anything else, although she is going to be an usher for the college production. In fact she doesn't think there's much extracurricular activity at the college. Even though she puts study first, Mary is having a bit of trouble completing assignments. Mary has had to give up being a Brownie leader because of university lecture times. She has reduced her babysitting and would be looking for a part-time job if she had more time.

The highlight of her college experience has been teaching practice section. She also has a really good tutor group which she thinks is important because the students can talk together. Mary hasn't too many complaints apart from a few lecturers who are a bit boring and the welcome in orientation week which went on too long. She thinks she has matured since she's been at college. Her views are more broadminded - even her friends have noticed the difference.

STUDENT PROFILE 2

Betty at 25 has worked on computers as well as hairdressing after leaving her single sex girls school and enrolling at the College of Education. Betty's father is a company director and her mother is a secondary school teacher. Betty has helped out with remedial reading in a school, which has given her some idea of the challenges ahead. She is looking forward to a satisfying career in education and welcomes the security of occupation. She thinks it likely that she will move on from primary teaching to some other branch of education. She has glanced at the Picot Report but has not otherwise read very much on educational topics.

Betty is looking forward to the college as a supportive institution where the work is challenging but also fun. She is keen to start a new career and is glad of the chance to continue her own education. She thinks she'll find the break from old friends quite difficult. Working while on the course to cope with financial demands may also be a problem. At this stage she has some anxiety about how well she will cope on teaching practice section although she is looking forward to that experience.

Betty is looking forward to work in most areas of the curriculum but has a hesitation about music and health. She also thinks she may need extra help with maths. Her preference is to teach intermediate age children but she doesn't like streamed groups and is hoping to teach mixed ability groups in a multicultural classroom. Betty thinks that the most important quality of a good teacher is the ability to communicate well with children. She also thinks teachers need to achieve active participation from each pupil; make learning fun; be able to see things from a child's perspective; be sensitive to cultural differences and be competent in a range of subject areas. Betty thinks children who fail probably have difficulty understanding the work set by the teacher and are too shy to ask questions.

Betty thinks the most important weaknesses in schools today are overlarge classes and not enough funding for pupils with special needs. On the other hand, the system is staffed with caring teachers who make learning fun, and run varied classroom programmes.

Betty is concerned about a number of equity issues in New Zealand schools: sex-role stereotyping; inequalities among children from different ethnic groups; and children coming into school disadvantaged because of financial hardship. Although Betty thinks the Treaty of Waitangi is important historically, she regards New Zealand as a multicultural rather than a bicultural society.

Six months into the college course Betty says the course is really worthwhile but also regards the college as a bureaucratic institution where there is a lot of paper work to do. Students seem to have to run around after so many different people to get decisions. As she has to work to make some extra money Betty finds juggling the timetable quite difficult and wishes the course could be more condensed for mature students. She thinks there are lots of gaps and periods of wasted time which is frustrating.

As far as the course work goes, Betty is really pleased with maths because the lecturer is so dedicated and has made the students very aware of the individual needs of pupils. She is exempt from education which she thinks is just as well because from what she can gather she has already done it all at university. She's really sorry for another student who has a masters degree in German and has to go to all education lectures. This student finds the handouts really useful but the lectures are a bit of a waste of time. Betty is really disappointed with the multicultural studies course. She says they spend a lot of time singing or talking about the Treaty but not really coming to grips with any problems children have in the school system. The students have called a big hui to talk about the course because they think it is a waste of time. Music and physical education also have dedicated lecturers and the courses are very helpful.

Betty is doing one university subject to finish a degree. Her course is on early determinants of behaviour and she is lectured to by both medical and education staff. It's not a common paper for teachers college students to do but Betty thinks it's really great and she's pleased to find out more about such things as cot deaths and drug abuse. She thinks the work at college is a lot easier than that at university but there is more of it. At college unless you do a real 'stinker' of an essay you'll always pass. She finds the college much friendlier than the university. It's smaller and the students and lecturers all have a common goal. She's disappointed that there are various courses at the university she can't take because of when they are timetabled - a course on reading, for example, is at 11 o'clock in the morning. It's a great pity there isn't better liaison between the college and the university.

Betty finds the college a bit structured - everybody doing the same thing. Betty has had experiences overseas, for example, which she would like to explore in social studies but it doesn't seem possible. She'd also like some help with blackboard handwriting skills - not the only one! In some ways the lecturers treat students as individuals, in other ways they are treated like Brown's cows.

Betty feels that most of the equity issues have been addressed at least

in part at college, but as she is of French descent she does find the emphasis on biculturalism a bit hard to take. She also thinks male students are favoured.

Betty thinks the most negative thing about college is the emphasis on things like not being late and having to go to the deputy head if you get three lates - even if it's only five minutes. On the positive side she's really enjoying the support from other students and has met some really neat people this year.

WHY CHOOSE TEACHING?

INFLUENCES ON STUDENTS' DECISION TO TEACH

The students were asked a series of questions about the factors which influenced their decision to train to teach in primary schools. Firstly, they completed a checklist in answer to the question:

Which, if any, of the following factors led to your decision to teach?

The items in the checklist were derived largely from files available to us through the colleges. These included statements made by prospective students on their application forms about their reasons for wanting to teach. The students' responses to the checklist are listed and arranged in categories in Table 5, and summary comments on the table follow.

COMMENTS:

* Intending students, particularly the women, singled out their enjoyment of children and their desire to work with them as being the main reason for wanting to teach, (more than 80% of students in each case). Over half the students (56%) had been influenced by earlier experiences of working with children. This was particularly true for mature students.

* Two thirds of the students regarded a teacher's job as a satisfying one. Christchurch students were significantly more likely than those from the other two colleges to believe that the education system provides career opportunities.

Table 5

Factors which influenced the students' decision to teach

Influencing factors	N	%
Being with Children		
I enjoy being with children	463	84
I want to work with children	457	83
Having already worked with children	305	56
Teaching as a Career		
A teacher's job is a satisfying one	362	66
Working conditions	265	48
Education system provides career opportunities	230	42
I've wanted to teach for as long as I can remember	183	33
Security of occupation	170	31
Teaching will be more satisfying than my present job	109	20
I like the idea of being a student	45	8
Personal Skills and Experience		
I enjoy learning	359	65
An interest for particular subjects	198	36
I have excellent communication skills	196	36
I am mature with important life experiences	178	32
Teaching fits in with my recreational interests	161	29
View of the System		
I want to influence New Zealand's future	194	35
My concern for Maori and Pacific Island children	139	25
The education system needs changing	115	21
Influences on Choice of Career		
Teacher or teachers	219	40
Parents	118	21
Other students	115	21
Experiences with brothers and sisters	99	18
Church background	76	14
Other relatives	72	13

NOTE: This table is based upon the responses of all 549 students.

* Students' personal skills and experience influenced their decision to teach. Of the categories we pre-selected, student enjoyment of learning was referred to by two-thirds of the students. Students over the age of 20 were significantly more likely than younger students to refer to their enjoyment of learning.

* Relatively few students (21%) were starting out with a view of 'changing the system'. If they were, they were more likely to be mature students than school leavers. Nor were many influenced at this stage by a particular concern for Maori and Pacific Island children (25%). Maori and Pacific Island students were much more likely than Pakeha students to give their concern for Maori and Pacific Island children as a reason for wishing to teach. There were also some differences by college. Twenty-eight percent of Wellington students, for example, compared with 17% in Christchurch believe 'the education system needs changing'. Similarly, 35% of Wellington students compared with 26% of those from Auckland and 18% of those from Christchurch said that one factor influencing their decision to teach was their concern for Maori and Pacific Island children.

* Students were asked if they had been influenced by others in their decision to teach. Where this was the case prospective students were most likely to be influenced by a particular teacher or teachers (40%). Next in importance were the influence of parents, particularly for school leavers (21%), followed by other teachers college students (21%) - particularly for males - and other relatives 13%. The experience with their own brothers and sisters which influenced 18% of trainees could perhaps also be included in this category. Maori students were more likely than Pakeha to cite their experiences with their brothers and sisters as influencing their decision to train to teach.

* Only 14% of students indicated that their church background and experience had been influential.

* The 'idea of being a student' ranked very low as a factor in leading to the students' decision to teach - only 8% of trainees. This is an interesting finding in the light of our later experience of interviewing students particularly in Auckland many of whom were excited by the experience of just being a student within a group of students.

* About a third of the students (33%) claimed to have wanted to teach 'for as long as I can remember'.

PRIMARY TEACHING AS A CAREER

Students were also asked to respond to a checklist designed to indicate whether primary teaching was their first choice of career and whether or not they expected to remain in the education service. Table 6 summarises the student responses.

Table 6

Trainees' intentions with regard to teaching as a career

Stated intention	N	%
Lifelong career in education	366	67
Primary teaching first choice of career	398	54
Primary teaching as stepping stone to work in other areas of education	258	47
Being a student as important as future teaching career	71	13
Rather drifted into teaching	44	8
Would have preferred secondary teaching	35	6
Preferred career outside of teaching	30	5

NOTE: This table is based upon the responses of all 549 students.

Although more than two-thirds (67%) of the students (particularly those over the age of 20) expected to make education a 'lifelong career', just over half (54%) regarded primary teaching as a first choice of career. It is not surprising therefore, that nearly half of the students (47%) regarded primary teaching as a 'stepping stone for work in other areas of education'. On the evidence presented it is not possible to surmise which branch of the education service these students would prefer, particularly as only 35 students (6%) said they would have preferred secondary. (Maori students were more likely than Pakeha to fall into this category.)

Not many students felt that 'being a student was probably as important as thinking about their future career as a primary teacher' (13%). This figure, along with the low number (8%) who said they 'rather drifted into

teaching', suggests a high degree of commitment to a career in education.

There was a group of 30 students who said they would have preferred a career outside of teaching. Some of these referred to a career within the education service such as childcare, nannying, child psychology, child counselling, and woodwork teaching. A few of these students indicated that they regarded primary teaching as a useful background experience. In a range of individual responses there were students who would have preferred to work in the arts, or to be a minister of religion, a photographer, an accountant, a builder, a sign writer, a medical researcher, a doctor, a lawyer, a traffic office, or to have joined the RNZAF, the army or the police.

AGE OF CHILDREN STUDENTS WOULD PREFER TO TEACH

Prospective students were also asked to state a preference for the age group of children they would like to teach. Their responses are given in Table 7.

Table 7

The age group students would most like to teach

Age group preferred	N	%
5-7 year olds	145	26
8-10	184	34
11-12	121	22
Over 12 year olds	50	9
No preference	152	28

NOTE: This table is based upon the responses of all 549 students. About 100 students ticked more than one category.

COMMENTS:

* Eight- to ten-year olds or 'middle primary' was the group preferred by the highest proportion of students, just over a third (34%).

* However, the differences between preferred age groups were not great. In fact the groupings, including those trainees who had 'no preference', were relatively evenly distributed.

* Both 5-7 year olds (27%), and 11-12 year olds (22%) could be regarded as special groupings in the sense that the former are very young children located in the junior school and include new entrants; and the later are the older children within a primary school and might well be at an intermediate school.

* The number of trainees interested in teaching older children, over 12 years old, was quite low (10%). There would be relatively few of this age group within the primary school.

* The total percentage of trainees preferring to teach children 11 years old and over was about the same as that wanting to teach 8-10 year olds (32% as against 34%)

* The percentage of those trainees indicating they would like to teach children over 12 years old was slightly higher than the percentage stating a preference to go secondary teaching (10% as against 7%).

* Female students were more likely than males to wish to teach 5-7 year-olds. Male students were more likely than females to want to teach children of 11 years and older.

SPECIAL GROUPS OF CHILDREN

Students were also asked if there were any particular groups of children with whom they would like to work. A high proportion of the students (70%) said there were. About a third of these referred to children with special needs - children with physical, mental or emotional handicaps of which the most frequently mentioned were deaf children. Children with learning difficulties associated with school, particularly slow readers, formed another important category. Ten students referred to children with special abilities or gifted children.

About 40 students said they would like to work with pupils from a particular ethnic background. Those included Maori and other Polynesian children; any children for whom English was a second language; and refugees.

Other students said they would like to work with children they believed to be disadvantaged because they came from poor backgrounds, including broken homes.

In a range of miscellaneous comments students referred to an interest in working with pupils who had some particular ability such as drama, music, art or sport; came from particular religious backgrounds, usually Roman Catholic; or belonged to a specific age group such as new entrants or children in intermediate schools.

STUDENT IMPRESSIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF COLLEGE BEFORE ENTRY

Information about Course[15]

Students in all three colleges were more likely to get an idea of what the college was like from friends who were already teachers than from any other source. In Auckland and Christchurch almost half of the students had also obtained information from the school careers adviser and/or read publicity material. Although fewer students in Wellington had found these sources useful, compared to other possible sources they were important too. The open day at Wellington attracted more student interest than those at other colleges, with 21% of students attending, compared to 15% of Christchurch students and only 6% of Auckland students. The teacher recruitment officers based at the respective colleges reached at least a quarter of the students, and in Christchurch half of the students cited the officer as a source of information.

University careers advisers and radio advertisements were least-mentioned in all three colleges as sources of information about the colleges.

Impressions of the College Course

* Prospective students from all three colleges were impressed with the wide variety of courses which they expected to be available for them. This was particularly so in Wellington where 40% of students' comments were along these lines. Although only 7% of Wellington students' comments referred to the bi/multicultural aspect of the courses being offered, this was more than in both Christchurch and Auckland (1% and 3% respectively). A comparatively high proportion of Auckland students

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15. See also *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 5, Table A6.

(15%) were not prepared to make any comment about their impressions of the college before admission. Compared with those in the other two colleges, Christchurch students were more likely to have gained the impression that, while the course would keep everyone busy, it would be easy when compared with either the university or school.

Aspects of College Course and Life Students are Looking Forward To[16]

The prospective students were asked (by responding to a checklist) which particular aspect of the college course they were most looking forward to.

* Not surprisingly, over three-quarters of the students (77%) were looking forward to the preparation for their career in teaching.

* A similar proportion (76%) were looking forward to the practical aspects of the course through teaching practice.

* Just under half (49%) were looking forward to the 'intellectual stimulation'.

* Forty-three percent of prospective students were looking forward to being able to organise their own learning.

* About a third (34%) were looking forward to the educational theory.

As well as the course of training, students were looking forward to other aspects of college life. Based on prospective student responses to a second checklist:

* More than three-quarters of the prospective students (78%) were looking forward to continuing their own education.

* Nearly as many (71%) were looking forward to making friends of their own age.

* Taking part in music and/or dramatic productions was looked forward to

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16. See also *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 5, Tables A7 and A8.

by about half of the prospective students.

* A similar number were looking forward to being involved in sporting activities.

* Nearly half of the prospective students (46%) were looking forward to being able to organise their own time.

* Less than a quarter (19%) expected to belong to a Maori or Polynesian club.

* Similarly, only 18% were looking forward to being independent and away from home.

What was the Reality?

Later, when we interviewed students six months into the college course, we noted that:

* The reputation colleges have of being friendly, supportive places was certainly borne out in practice, many students commenting on the friendliness of students and staff (often by way of comparison with the university).

* The students' expectations of being involved in cultural and sporting events was not always realised. In Wellington activities such as the choir and Kapa Haka are built into the college programme and enthusiastically supported by those students who attend. However, many students we interviewed at all three colleges were surprised that we asked if they were involved in college clubs because they thought there were so few operating.

* The fact that relatively few students had been 'looking forward to being independent and away from home' was because many would not have been able to survive if they had not continued to live at home. Others were already living away from home although some mature students had returned to living with parents after flatting for several years.

STUDENT PROBLEMS

When we asked prospective students, before they entered college, whether they thought they were going to have problems, over half of them thought that finances for daily needs would be a problem. Over a third were apprehensive about having to work while taking the course. Other issues (which we had pre-selected) worried relatively few students. (See Table 8.)

Table 8

Problems students thought they would encounter during training

Anticipated problems	N	%
Finances for daily needs	314	57
Having to work while taking the course	194	35
Learning to manage my time	164	30
Being confident with a class on teaching practice	121	22
Coping with demands of children/partner	100	18
Being away from old friends	89	16
Having less money than by friends	85	15
Being able to complete assignments	84	15
Shyness	83	15
Being able to understand assignments	69	13
Coping with requirements of course	67	12
Being away from home	56	10
Being able to organise my own learning	55	10
Teaching practice section	51	9
Understanding educational theory	48	9
Speaking/writing English well enough	47	9
Taking part in sport	43	8
Feeling I do not really fit into college life	42	8
Making new friends	41	7
Taking part in music/drama	41	7

NOTE: This table is based on responses from all 549 students.

STUDENT FINANCES

When we interviewed students six months into their college course, we presented students with the same list and asked them whether anything on the list had become a problem for them. Overall there were fewer problems than imagined.

The problem of finances affected students more than any other (43 out of 107 students interviewed). But a number of students had changed their minds about finances since starting college. Ten students who had not indicated that finances would be a problem when they completed the questionnaire before entry, now said they were a problem. However, more than twice that number (21), said that finances were not the problem that they had anticipated.

About the same number of students (45), had paid jobs while training. The majority of these worked 10 hours or less, with 17 saying they worked for fewer than five hours per week. Students worked at a wide range of jobs, the most common being as a shop assistant (often on Friday evening or Saturday). This was followed in popularity by waitressing or acting as bar attendant; housekeeping or cleaning; teaching music or sport; and babysitting or child minding. When asked to comment on student finances generally, the majority thought they didn't receive enough. More specifically they thought it was unfair that:

* the amount of support available to students was less than that available to other groups, notably people on the dole;

* parents were expected to support students at an age when they felt a need and obligation to be more independent;

* certain groups of students, notably 16 and 17 year olds, and married couples where both were students, were disadvantaged under the present system.

When we reported back to the colleges, staff were surprised that so few students in our interview sample had jobs outside college. We were also surprised because when we had talked with third-year students at the end of 1988 finances seemed to be a big problem for them.

This is an issue which we will continue to monitor with the following thoughts in mind:

* does the financial situation of students worsen in their subsequent years?

* do students use strategies other than paid work to combat their poor financial situation such as living at home with parental support?

* do students in subsequent years work for other than financial reasons? (It was suggested to us that third-year students might work in order to combat boredom)

* to what extent will fee increases add to existing student problems?

LEARNING AND TEACHING

One section of the questionnaire focused on issues to do with learning and teaching. Learning and teaching was also an important theme in the student interviews conducted after the students had been at the college for six months. What makes a good teacher? What are student views on children as learners? How do students view their role as classroom teachers? Are there any curriculum areas they think they will need special help with in order to prepare them for the classroom? Do students think the lecturers know and treat them as individual learners?

WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEACHER?

We were interested to find out the students' views of a 'good' teacher, prior to entry to college. These are summarised in Table 9.

The majority of answers by far, accounting for nearly half the total number of student responses, show that the students viewed personal qualities as the most important determinants of a 'good' teacher. Next, but of far less importance, were communication skills and a knowledge of teaching methods. The personal qualities considered particularly important were

- patience
- sense of humour
- understanding
- confidence
- enthusiasm.

Table 9

Student views on the qualities and abilities which make a 'good' primary school teacher

Desirable characteristics	N	%
Personal qualities	711	48
Communication skills	247	17
Knowledge of teaching methods	235	16
Skilled in curriculum areas	77	5
Commitment to equity issues	45	3
Wide knowledge/experience	33	2
Love of children	29	2
Academic qualifications	12	1
Other	94	6
All responses	1,483	100

NOTE: This question was coded for only half of the respondents (275) randomly selected. Students were able to list up to *six* qualities. Percentages are based on the number of responses, rather than the number of respondents.

Students were also asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1-5 as to their competence in these areas. The majority of ratings (76%) were at 1 or 2 on the scale. Very few ratings (3%) were at the 4 and 5 level. In other words, on entering college students believed they already possessed in large measure the personal qualities and abilities necessary to be a good teacher.

STUDENT VIEWS ON REASONS WHY CHILDREN SUCCEED OR FAIL AT SCHOOL

Through the questionnaire we asked students to respond to two further questions which we will consider together, as they are essentially two sides of the same coin:

I think children learn best when ...

and

What do you think are the main reasons why some children do not succeed at school?

Coding these open-ended questions raised the typical problems of qualitative data analysis - interpretation, classification and quantification. A model for classification was prepared which suited both questions. Essentially the model was divided into three segments, namely, factors dependent on or influenced by:

Children: i) Their motivation; emotional state; self-esteem; personality; confidence.

ii) Their abilities: mental and physical, including health.

Teachers: i) Their overall competence as teachers; their teaching methods, including activity methods and discovery learning; their recognition of children as individuals; discipline.

ii) Teacher personality; teacher/pupil relationships.

iii) The curriculum introduced by teachers: content; relevance; cultural appropriateness.

Environment: i) The home: parental support.

ii) The school, particularly the classroom atmosphere; organisation; resources.

iii) Influence of peers: class co-operation.

The student responses are tabulated in Tables 10 and 11, and summary comments follow.

COMMENTS:

* The students' responses tended to stress the teacher's role as teacher rather than the children's role as learner. Students certainly regarded the teacher and the methods he or she uses as the major reason why children succeed at school. If the responses referring to teaching methods and the importance of the teacher's personality are combined in Table 10, they account for 58% of the responses. By comparison comments about children's motivation and abilities account for only 20% of the

Table 10

Student views on how children learn best

Category of influence		N	%
Children:	Motivation	132	17
	Abilities	21	3
Teachers:	Competence: teaching methods	362	46
	Teacher personality	94	12
	Curriculum	18	2
Environment:	Home: parental support	31	4
	School and classroom	113	14
	Peers	11	1
Miscellaneous:	Dont know, not sure	6	1
All responses		788	100

NOTE: Responses in this table and Table 11 are based on a random sample of half the trainees (274).

responses. It is true however, that students' comments about teaching methods included comments that focused on children's learning.

* The students' attitudes towards the influence of parents and the home is interesting. They appeared to view both in a negative sense in that they were perceived as a major cause of school failure but relatively unimportant in helping children to succeed at school. (This is despite the fact that the word 'school' was included in the statement about not succeeding but not in the statement about learning best.)

* Children's natural abilities were not ranked very highly in terms of school success although disabilities are an important factor in school failure. Physical disabilities and poor health were likely to be mentioned more frequently than mental disabilities.

* The fact that the responses referring to the curriculum as summarised in Tables 10 and 11 do not appear to be very significant needs to be treated with caution. It is often difficult to distinguish between 'teaching methods' and 'curriculum' and the two categories as we classified them tended to overlap. It is interesting, however, that the curriculum was more likely to be seen as contributing to failure than as a positive factor in school success. This was usually when the content was thought to be lacking in relevance, particularly for ethnic minority groups.

Table 11

Student views on why children do not succeed

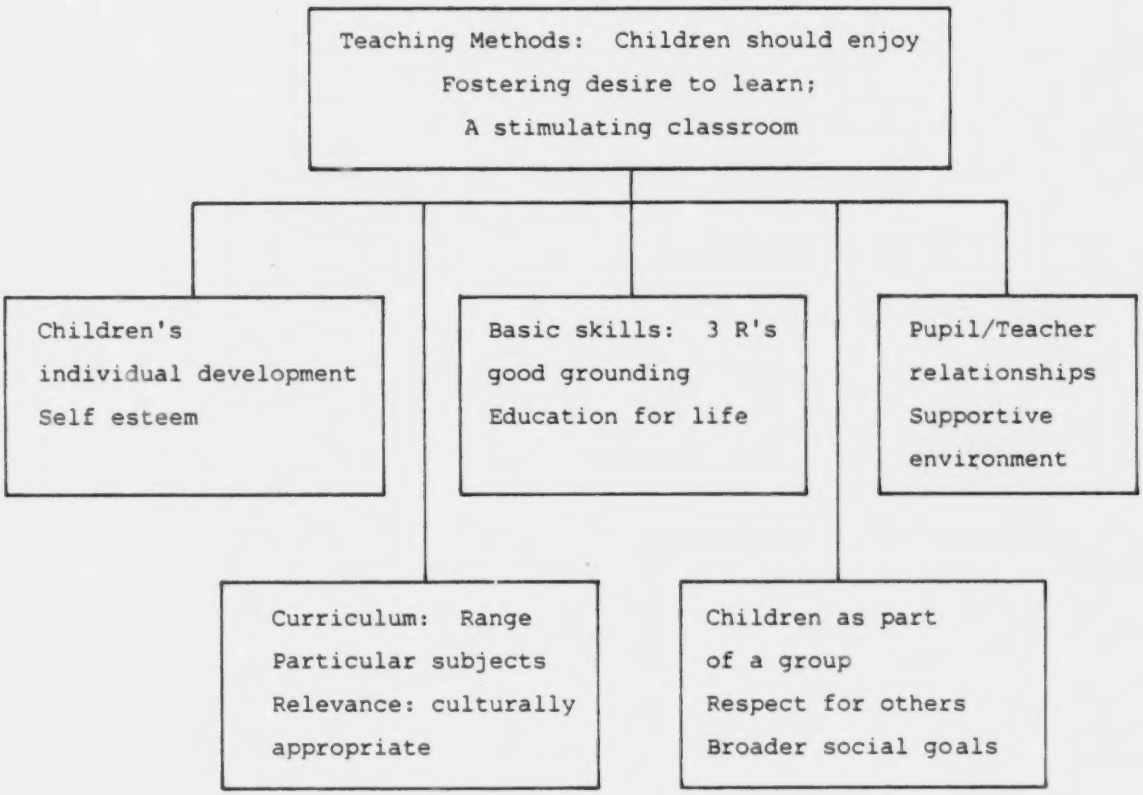
Category of influence		N	%
Children:	Motivation	128	17
	Abilities	77	10
Teachers:	Competence: teaching methods	181	24
	Teacher personality	42	5
	Curriculum	43	6
Environment:	Home: parental support	208	27
	School and classroom	34	4
	Peers	40	5
Miscellaneous:	Don't know, not sure	15	2
All responses		768	100

THE TRAINEES AS FUTURE CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Having considered student views on why children succeed or fail at school, we focused on the trainees' views of themselves as future classroom teachers. We asked them what were the most important things they hoped to be able to do for the children in their class. Their wide-ranging responses are summarised in Diagram 2.

DIAGRAM 2

Prospective Trainees as Teachers



Teaching Methods

Trainees saw themselves in a central role in developing positive attitudes towards learning by providing a stimulating and lively classroom. Their aim was to foster a desire to learn on the part of the children. 'Instil in them a drive to learn'; 'generate an inquiring mind'; 'impart to them the joy of learning'; 'get them excited and motivated about learning'.

Many students expressed the view that in order for children to learn they must 'enjoy' learning. (This was so for about a third of the 260 student

comments included in this category.) The classroom must be '...a fun place of learning and growing'. Learning '...must be fun and not a chore'.

> 'Make learning enjoyable. Kids don't like to think of work as laborious.'

The idea that learning should be pleasurable coincides with what New Zealand parents and children expect of the early years of school in particular.[17] It would be interesting to know how universal this view is. It certainly contrasts with attitudes towards school and learning described in Brian Jackson's study of children from different cultural backgrounds in the United Kingdom. He had this to say about a five-year-old Pakistani girl starting school in Huddersfield, Yorkshire:

> 'Small, brown-eyed Yasmin, quiet and obedient, knows exactly why she has to start school: to learn to read, write and speak good English, to train for a good job. She does not expect to play, nor imagine friendships, nor expect any reward save that of hard work to be successfully accomplished over the next thirteen years.'[18]

The student view that learning should be fun and not a chore, is in line with the reasons students give for preferring their college to their university experience mentioned elsewhere in this report.

Children's Individual Development

A common student view of what they intend to do for the children in their class would be summarised by the student who wrote:

> 'To give each individual student the opportunity to progress in their education and grow as individuals.'

The role of the teacher is to 'give each child the opportunity to learn', 'to encourage individuality and identity'. More than a third of the nearly 200 student comments which have been categorised under the heading of children's individual development, referred to the need to develop children's self-confidence and esteem. Teachers should help children to be proud of themselves, to realise their full potential and be responsible for themselves.

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17. See Renwick, M.E. (1984). *To school at five*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research, p. 10.

18. Jackson, B. (1979). *Starting school*. London, Croom Helm, p. 30.

In order for children to develop as individuals teachers must give children individual attention, recognise individual differences and cater for individual needs.

Basic Skills

Prospective students believed primary teachers have a particular responsibility to provide children with a grounding in the basic skills. Central to this core of knowledge are the 3 R's - reading, writing and arithmetic. A stable beginning to education will enable children to '...continue with their education and equip them for life'. Children's experience at primary school lays the foundation for their future educational achievements.

Pupil Teacher Relationships

In order to achieve these goals, the teacher needs to develop an environment where children are supported and the teacher is trusted.

> 'Provide a loving, caring environment in which children can feel happy, secure and unafraid to explore themselves.'
>
> 'Ensure the children are happy in the classroom and feel able to approach one with any concerns they may have.'

As well as teachers needing to be 'understanding' and a 'friend', a minority of students also spoke of the need for teachers to discipline children when needed, and, while relating to children on a personal level, to 'also remain the authoritative figure' in the relationship. Teachers must also set 'good examples'. A teacher's values help to shape those of the child.

The Curriculum

Once again it is difficult to distinguish between teaching methods (already discussed) and the curriculum. Relatively few students referred to the curriculum although some said they hoped to provide a varied curriculum and others singled out particular subject areas which they intended to emphasise. These were most commonly either creative or sporting activities. There were a few references to a culturally appropriate curriculum, with a concern for

children from ethnic minority groups.

Children as Part of a Group

Relatively few of the student responses referred to the importance of the teacher's role in encouraging children to get along with each other. Those who did, made comments such as:

> 'To help them to relate to their peers in a loving, helpful way, accepting differences in each other.'
>
> 'To create a respect in the class both for themselves and their classmates. To hopefully encourage tolerance and open mindedness.'

Students referred to the teacher's role in helping children to develop positive attitudes towards each other, to be respectful and tolerant of their differences and to co-operate with others. But the broader social goals of responsibility to the group were less likely to be mentioned than the needs of individual children.

Compared with the 25% of student responses which referred to the need for teachers to be concerned with children's individual development and identity, only about 10% were concerned with children's relationships with each other. As with the stress on children 'enjoying' learning, this may be a culture-bound attitude. It would be interesting, for example, to compare these attitudes with those of Japanese students.

Overall, the students' comments tended to imply that learning is an activity carried out between teacher and pupil, with the teacher in a dominant role. Co-operative learning between pupils, or pupils learning from each other, were rarely mentioned.

PROSPECTIVE TRAINEES IN THE CLASSROOM

In a further attempt to tap student attitudes towards their future role as classroom teachers, we asked the prospective trainees to do a quick sketch of themselves with a class of children. We also asked them to describe what they and the children were doing. (See *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 5, Tables A9-A14.)

COMMENTS ON OUR INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDENT DRAWINGS

* Students' artistic skills obviously influenced what they drew. Some produced 'works of art'; others did very quick sketches.

* Limited time and/or artistic confidence may have influenced the subject matter students chose. For example, the fact that such a high proportion of students chose to draw themselves surrounded by a semi-circle of children may have been an easy option compared with drawing a classful of children engaged in a range of activities.

* The number of children depicted as being in a class may also have been influenced by the time available to draw the picture. It was, however, interesting to note the high proportion of students who drew classes with small numbers of children, certainly 20 or fewer.

* Typically students:

  - Drew themselves in a dominant role in control of the total class. Nearly 60% of the drawings showed the teacher either standing or sitting in front of the whole class. Similarly more than 60% of the drawings showed the children sitting as a class.

  - Placed emphasis on whole class teaching, with only about 10% of drawings showing children working in groups, and a similar number of children working as individuals.

  - In fewer than 5% of the drawings, showed children working at a range of different activities.

* Oral language, which usually meant the teacher reading stories to children, but included morning talks and general 'talking and listening' dominated the curriculum area described. Oral language amounted for about 50% of all the activities described.

* Art and craft; music and drama; and the teaching of reading and maths were subject areas equally likely to be mentioned - about 10% in each case.

* Subject areas mentioned by fewer than 5% of students were written language, physical education, science and Maoritanga.

* Since such a high proportion of students drew teachers and pupils sitting and talking or listening, it was not surprising that very little equipment was being used in the classroom.

* Young children dominated the pictures, with 44% of students drawing 5- 7 year olds. This was closely followed by 8-10 year olds. Very few students drew an age range of more than two years.

(See also *Windows on Teacher Education: Appendices*, Appendix 7 for samples of the student drawings.)

THE STUDENTS AS LEARNERS : THE COLLEGE COURSE

As we saw earlier, before entry students had a clear view that one of their responsibilities as a classroom teacher would be to attempt to cater for the individual needs of children in the classroom. We wondered to what extent they felt that college lecturers were applying this principle to them as students. When we interviewed students after six months at college, we asked the question.

> *If one of the functions of a classroom teacher is to look at each child as an individual and cater for individual needs, do you consider that this principle is being applied to you during your training?*

The student responses by college are summarised in Table 12. As the table shows, the proportion of students who consider that they are treated as individuals varied from college to college. In Auckland and Wellington the students were almost equally likely to think they were or were *not* being treated as individuals. In Christchurch, however, students who believed they were *not* being treated as individuals outnumbered those who believed that they were by a factor of almost two to one. Regardless of college:

* Students who thought they were treated as individuals tended to do so because the lecturers were friendly and approachable. Lecturers were willing to help with individual needs if the students went to them.

Table 12

The extent to which students believe they are treated as an individual

	Auckland		Wellington		Christchurch	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	20	49	15	44	9	28
No	17	41	16	47	16	50
Yes/No	4	10	2	6	7	22
No response			1	3		
Total	41	100	34	100	32	100

* Students who did *not* think they were treated as an individual tended to do so because classes were handled as a whole for teaching purposes, for example:

  'A lot of lecturers don't know who we are in our area. Courses aimed at classes rather than individuals.' (Wellington)

  'You're a group - you learn as a group, not as an individual.' (Christchurch)

Other factors mentioned by students:

* As with all issues related to student experience it is hard to generalise because so much depends on individual lecturers and students. This is the reason for the number of students who found it difficult to commit themselves to a definite yes or no answer.

* Much depends on class and group size, although students didn't always feel small classes necessarily led to more individual treatment.

  'The fact that our classes are small is definitely an advantage. There is plenty of room to look at us individually, but I don't ever feel I've been taken aside or given any personal acknowledgement since I've been here.' (Christchurch)

* Students were more likely to feel that they had to take the initiative than that lecturers sought them out as students.

* Students taking university courses were likely to think that college lecturers were more likely to treat them as individuals than university lecturers.

'Definitely. Whenever you need help, you just go and ask the lecturer and they always talk on a one to one basis. ... That's something I haven't found anywhere else until now and it's a shock to the system to start with but it gets really helpful, it's a more friendly atmosphere, and you don't feel afraid to say anything or make a comment. ... You're expecting something more like university where you're getting lecturers just throwing out the information and you've got to sit back and listen. But here you get feedback and talk and you can make suggestions and comments and they treat you more like a human than a learning machine ... a lot of tutors go out of their way to assist in a lot of areas which is really good.' (Christchurch)

* The options taken by students may influence the attitudes of students to this issue, as does the success or otherwise of the tutor group.

'I feel as though I'm lost in the system, perhaps because our tutor group is not strong.' (Auckland)

* Although individual lecturers may be willing, trying to find time to discuss individual student concerns within the college timetable is difficult.

The question we asked assumed that it was important for lecturers to know students as individuals. A few students commented that the situation at college was different from children in the classroom. Firstly, as adult students, they were more able to seek help. Secondly, unlike primary teachers, lecturers came in contact with many students so that they had a much more difficult task. Such students believed that, in the circumstances, lecturers did try.

STUDENTS' SKILLS AND ABILITIES RECOGNISED AND USED

When we interviewed the sample of students six months into their training, we asked them a series of questions about whether they thought their particular skills and abilities had been used. We also asked them if they thought they had any weaknesses or skills that still needed to be developed.

Regardless of the college attended, most students thought that their skills were being acknowledged and used, although some added a rider 'to a

certain extent' or 'in some areas'. Christchurch students were rather less likely than students in the other two colleges to think their skills were being used, but the differences were not great. (Nine out of 32 students in Christchurch, seven out of 34 in Wellington and five out of 41 in Auckland said they did *not* think their skills were being used.) Students who felt their skills and abilities were *not* being used inclined to the view that '...certain skills were looked for in students but having got in they're not used'. Other examples of student comments are:

> 'No. I don't really think I've been given the chance to use the skills I came in with. I can't really say I've extended myself in the six months.' (Christchurch)
>
> 'No recognition for them. I spent a lot of time training for social work and have worked as a social worker. I've worked extensively on assessment programmes of young children. ... You get exemption but no credit. You should get credits to help you out of here quicker and into the paid workforce.' (Wellington)

Students tended to categorise their skills and abilities as:

- related to specific subjects
- personal qualities
- previous experience with children.

Students' skills and abilities may either be used in college or on teaching section.

Students tended to feel that skills related to specific subjects were of most value to them in college, particularly in relation to optional subjects chosen. Personal qualities such as confidence and leadership skills could be used both in college and on section, but students commonly indicated that their personal skills and previous experience with children came to the fore on teaching sections.

One reason why Wellington students in particular felt that their skills and abilities had been used was because of the wide range of optional courses available to them:

> 'Yes, you can do whatever you want to in this place - so many options you're given - so you can develop the skills you have if you want to.'

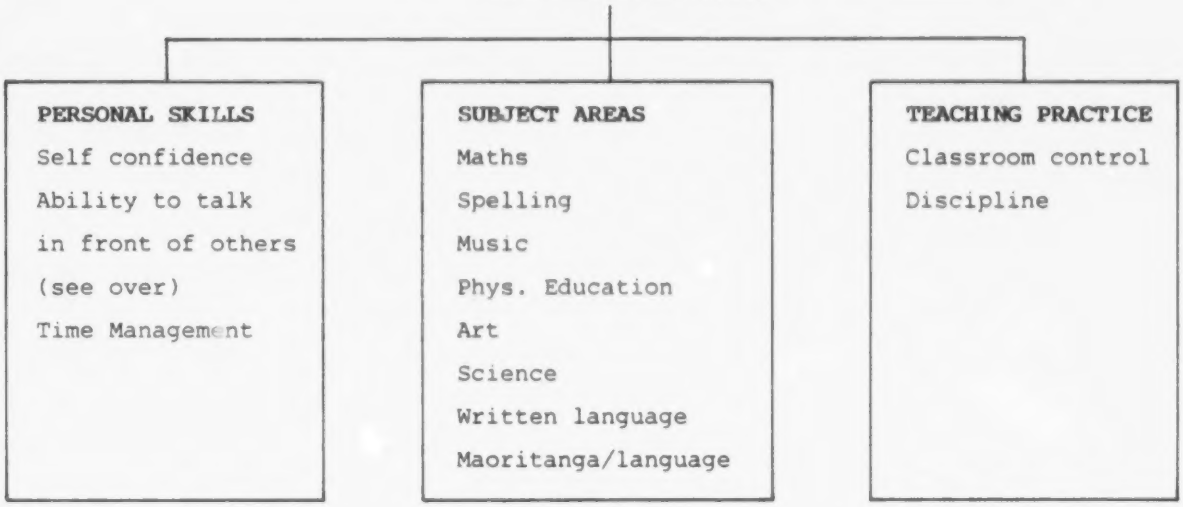
However, all colleges have optional courses which students are encouraged to take to develop special interests.

STUDENT WEAKNESSES

Six months into their course all students in Christchurch, and all but 4 or 5 in Auckland and Wellington, thought they had specific weaknesses with which they needed help. These tended to fall into one of three categories: personal skills, subject areas and teaching practice. Diagram 3 is an attempt to summarise these weaknesses.

DIAGRAM 3

Student Weaknesses



But students were receiving some help, as the following summary indicates.

Auckland

* 50% of those who listed weaknesses felt that something was already being done about them - mostly helped in college (eg spelling course), some on section (e.g., confidence with children).
* About half of the remainder thought that something would be done.
* Those who hadn't received help commented:
  - Very full schedule, difficult to fit in extra help.
  - Up to individuals to do something themselves.
  - Tutorial system not always helpful.
  - Can't use sport skills, because so little at college.

Wellington

* Of those students who had a weakness, 22 out of 31 said they had received help, nine said they had not.
* Five expected to receive help in the future.
* Most help had been through the college course work.

Christchurch

* About 50% of those who had weaknesses thought something was being done about them.

* By far the most common were references to increased confidence and the development of personal skills on teaching sections.

For all colleges it may be that students did not avail themselves of help that is offered.

TAPE TRANSCRIPTS

The following excerpts from tape transcripts of Christchurch students indicate that the lack of confidence some students expressed about speaking in front of others may be well-founded! These are verbatim answers given to us by three students in response to questions about 'Tomorrow's Schools',[19] exposure to Maori language on the course, and important things they had learnt professionally. The examples were selected because they were so incoherent. They are not typical of the sample as a whole, many of whom were very articulate.

Christchurch

1. Information about 'Tomorrow's Schools'

   'Um which is. Well, I've done, you know, done quite a bit in Social Science. Actually looked at it and everything and my lecturer sort of put his view forward and everything about it. I sort of, I haven't really learnt much more than what I sort of knew. I've just got more confused about it, you know. To tell you the truth you know, it's just

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19. Term taken from the title of the 1988 Department of Education report on the reform of education administration in New Zealand, to refer to the whole education reform process currently in train.

sort of, there's a lot more in it than I thought there was and there's sort of so much underlying things that you're sort of not aware of it does basically confuse you, yes.'

2. Exposure to Maori Language on the Course

'Just that, just that, that the course where, you know, the lecturers spoke in Maori and in English and mostly they said something in Maori and then they repeated it. People here who haven't got any sense of it pick it up. Otherwise greetings, um, there's a lot of greetings around college. Kia ora and that to people in passing. I find that different from in ... where I come from. And kia ora, oh sort of, what did I say? You know, kia ora mate, and in there and after I've had that experience you sort of pick it up and really, otherwise, Social Studies we've looked at Taha Maori in schools and all that and that's the only other really exposure I've had.'

3. Important Things Learned Professionally

'Um, oh I think I've learnt how to, I don't know if I quite, I don't know if I could, but how to go about dealing with the, with the parents, that's been a bonus. Um, how to deal with kids who were having problems. We've done in education, done, you know, quite a bit on why kids behave the way they do which is really helpful. I mean, you know, look behind it.'

THE CURRICULUM

We were interested to tap student views on the primary school curriculum before they commenced their training. In particular to find out:

* The curriculum area they were *most* looking forward to.
* The curriculum area they were *least* looking forward to.
* Any curriculum areas where they thought they would need special help at college.

CURRICULUM AREAS MOST AND LEAST LOOKED FORWARD TO

Tables 13a, b, c summarise the student responses. In Table 13a and 13b the responses are ranked according to the areas students are *most* or *least* looking forward to. In Table 13c the curriculum areas are grouped according to like subjects.

Table 13a

Student attitude towards various curriculum areas: those they were most looking forward to (ranked)

Curriculum areas most looked forward to	N of responses	% of students
Physical education	251	46
Reading	216	39
Social studies	194	35
Art	186	33
Written language	159	29
Drama	148	27
Maori culture/language	134	24
Mathematics	130	24
Music	131	24
Oral language	114	21
Science	112	20
Health	87	16
Computer studies	70	13
All responses	1,932	

NOTE: These three tables are based upon the responses of all 549 students. Students could tick any one of 13 options.

COMMENTS ON TABLES 13a, b AND c:

* Overall, students were likely to tick more curriculum areas as being areas they were looking forward to than those they were not looking forward to (1,932 responses compared with 1,200 responses).

* This factor is reflected in the fact that a higher percentage of students referred to the areas they were looking forward to compared with those they were least looking forward to. For example, physical education, the subject that tops the list of preferred curriculum areas, was referred to by nearly half of the students (46%), whereas mathematics, the area which topped the list of those curriculum areas least looked forward to, was referred to by just over a third of the students (35%).

Table 13b

Student attitude towards various curriculum areas: those they were least looking forward to (ranked)

Curriculum areas least looked forward to	N of responses	% of students
Mathematics	191	35
Computer studies	189	35
Science	151	27
Music	116	21
Drama	100	19
Maori culture/language	100	19
Art	88	16
Physical education	64	12
Health	56	10
Social studies	47	9
Written language	45	8
Oral language	32	6
Reading	21	4
Total responses	1,200	

* Although there is a tendency in some cases for subjects low on the list of most looked forward to options to be high on the list of least looked forward to options (for example computer studies), the two lists are not mirror images of each other.

* One reason why computer studies is at the bottom of the list of subjects most looked forward to may be that students were not necessarily expecting to teach the subject at all levels of the primary school.

* Mathematics and music are interesting examples of subjects where although quite a high percentage of students were not looking forward to teaching them (35% and 21% respectively), a relatively high percentage were also looking forward to teaching them (24% in both subjects). This suggests that they are two areas where students may either know that

Table 13c

Student attitude towards various curriculum areas: subject groupings

Curriculum areas	Most looked forward to		Least looked forward to	
	N of responses	% of students	N of responses	% of students
Language:				
Written language	159	29	45	8
Oral language	114	21	32	6
Reading	216	39	21	4
Mathematics and Science:				
Mathematics	130	24	191	35
Science	112	20	151	28
Computer studies	70	13	189	34
Arts:				
Music	131	24	116	21
Art	186	34	88	16
Drama	148	27	100	18
Social Studies:				
Social studies	194	35	47	9
Maori culture/language	134	24	100	18
Health:				
Physical education	251	46	64	12
Health	87	16	56	10
Total responses	1,932		1,200	

they have strengths or feel themselves to be particularly weak. This fact has been confirmed in our interviews of students.

* Science is perhaps another subject area where students feel they have clearcut strengths and weaknesses - although 28% of students were not looking forward to teaching it, 20% of students were. Maori and Pacific Island students are less likely than Pakeha students to be looking forward to teaching science.

* It is interesting to note that Maori culture and language is relatively 'evenly' ranked as a curriculum area, both 'most' and 'least' looked forward to - 24% of students were looking forward to teaching it and 18% were not.

* In view of the importance of language skills in the curriculum it is interesting to note that the three areas we identified as written language, oral language and reading are at the bottom of the list of areas least looked forward to. The pattern is not so consistent for those areas most looked forward to, but reading ranks very highly on the list, looked forward to by 39% of students.

* Mature students are more likely than school leavers to be looking forward to oral language and reading. Social studies is the subject most looked forward to by mature students.

* School leavers are significantly more likely than mature students to be looking forward to teaching physical education.

* Male students compared with female are more likely to be looking forward to teaching science and physical education and least likely to be looking forward to teaching music. Female students are more likely than males to be looking forward to teaching reading.

* Maori and Pacific Island students are much more likely to be looking forward to teaching Maori language and culture than Pakeha students. Conversely, Pakeha students are likely to say they are least looking forward to teaching in this area.

WHERE STUDENTS NEED HELP

Prospective students were also asked if there were any curriculum areas which they thought they were going to need special help while at college. The student responses are summarised in Table 14.

Table 14

Curriculum areas where students need special help

Curriculum area	N of responses Auck	Wgtn	ChCh	Total	% of students
Mathematics	54	29	44	127	23
Maori culture and language	54	22	38	114	21
Computer studies	48	18	32	98	18
Music	31	21	24	76	14
Science	39	21	12	72	13
Language*	30	17	15	62	11
Art	22	11	23	56	10
Drama	18	8	12	38	7
Physical education	8	7	4	19	3
Social studies	11	3	1	15	3
Health	4	0	0	4	1

* Language can be subdivided, and by college the student responses are:

	Auck	Wgtn	Chch	Total
Oral	6	5	3	16
Written	16	8	11	35
Reading	2	1	0	3
Spelling	4	3	1	8
Total	30	17	15	72

COMMENTS:

* Mathematics was the subject where the highest proportion of students felt they need special help (23%). It was also the subject students were least looking forward to teaching.

* Maori culture and language was nearly as likely as maths to be an area where students felt they needed special help (21%) although it was not so high on the list of subjects students least looked forward to teaching.

* In line with the fact that physical education was the subject the highest proportion of students were looking forward to teaching was the fact that only 3% felt they needed special help with it.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

In early discussions with departmental officers on the direction the study should take, assessment in the colleges was one of the issues they asked us to look at. There was some concern expressed that:

* college lecturers do not specify what they are trying to achieve in their courses;
* there should be a clear statement from lecturers about how they assess the progress of students and the success of their own courses;
* we as researchers identify those students who fail and why;
* there should be some assessment in our study of how students perform in relation to the criteria for selection.

The difficulty in achieving any progress with the last point is that once students enter college they take different paths to achieve the same end qualification i.e. the Diploma in Teaching. Some courses are graded A,B,C and others are simply assessed on a pass/fail basis which makes comparisons both within and between colleges difficult.

Student Views on Assessment

We collected information from the students we interviewed on their perception of their own assessments and asked them what they thought of the methods used to assess them. Virtually all students agreed that they had been assessed since they arrived at college. The most frequently mentioned ways they said their work had been assessed were:

- assignments
- tests
- report forms (Wellington only).

Other methods mentioned by a few students in each college were:

- attendance
- self-assessment
- practical work
- participation in class
- lesson plans
- peer assessment.

Methods used varied depending on the courses taken. Questions on the methods used to assess teaching practice elicited a much narrower range of answers with most students referring to reports from:

- the associate teachers
- visiting lecturer
- the school principal
- tutors (Christchurch only)
- the marking of section folders.

We also asked those interviewed to rank on a scale of 1-5 (1 *Not at all satisfied,* through to 5 *Very satisfied*) their satisfaction both with the *methods* used to assess them and the assessments they had received. There tended to be greater satisfaction with the actual assessments students had been given than with the methods used to assess them. Students were also more satisfied with the assessment procedures used for their teaching practice than with those used for their in-college work.

Although the comments students made about assessment were particular to each course, their answers showed up some common themes:

* courses were too easy to pass, standards not high enough;
* not enough credit was given for time and effort spent on assignments - categories used for marking were too broad;
* students found it difficult to know how they are doing - they would like more constructive criticism;
* inconsistency in marking between subjects;
* visiting lecturers, for teaching practice, spent too little time with each student and too much emphasis was put on their report.

Students' Future Suitability as a Classroom Teacher

Six months into the course approximately half of the students felt that they had been given some feedback as to their suitability as a teacher. This was more likely to be on teaching practice rather than in college.

Opportunities for Self-Assessment

About half of the students overall (three-quarters in Wellington) felt they had been given the opportunity to assess themselves, but only in a limited number of courses. Again it was something more often associated with teaching practice. Only a few students said that it was something they did anyway without being given a formal opportunity.

Six months into the college course students saw the need for both formative and summative assessment:

i) They came to college wanting to train to teach, they wanted to know at any particular point in time, what they already knew, and what they needed to know to fulfil their goal (formative assessment).

ii) They were also concerned with the ultimate need to compete for jobs along with everyone else going through the system, so they saw a need to be credited for effort and achievement during the course (summative assessments).

There was a concern, however, that formative comments should be kept in college and not used against the student by later being available for prospective employers.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Many students were hoping to be able to continue their own education, some by enrolling in degree courses at the local university. Over all three colleges 38% of the students were expecting to enrol for a BEd/BA degree, although the percentages by college varied considerably. Twenty-eight percent of Auckland students, 29% of Wellington students and 55% of Christchurch students hoped to enrol for a degree course in conjunction with their teacher training. Christchurch has much closer links with the university than the other two colleges; physically the two campuses are close which makes it easier for college students to attend university lectures. This is not the case in the other two centres. Auckland students in particular find the physical separation very 'offputting', as it necessitates more travel, and the siting of the university in the central city makes parking virtually impossible.

When we interviewed students six months into the course it was obvious from the students' comments that most had decided whether to undertake university study in their first year, before they started college, probably because of the need to pre-enrol. Table 15 shows the numbers of students from our interview sample who enrolled at university. Most students undertaking university study in Auckland and Christchurch consulted college staff for advice. In Wellington, where by and large students did not seek advice from college staff, students were generally not aware that advice had been available. However students from Wellington seemed to be more satisfied that they had made the right decision. A majority of students in Auckland and Christchurch complained that they had little interest in the subjects they were taking and would rather have taken something that was of interest to them.

The motivation for almost all of the students taking university study was that a university degree had better job prospects.

Table 15

Numbers of students interviewed undertaking university study

College attended	Undertaking a university course		
	Yes	No	Total*
Auckland	11	25	36
Wellington	12	16	28
Christchurch	18	11	29

* Graduate entrants are not included in these figures.

At the same time, many students looked towards their university study to provide intellectual stimulation. Generally, those taking degree courses found them more intellectually stimulating than the college courses, assessment was more rigorous, and assignments took longer to research and complete. At the same time most students found the university an impersonal, unfriendly place in contrast to the colleges, all of which were seen as friendly, warm, supportive environments.

The majority of students in Auckland and Wellington and one third of the students in Christchurch were not taking university study. The main reasons those students gave for not doing so were:

* students did not feel they had sufficient time for university work;
* they wanted to settle down at college first and get an idea of the workload involved in college;
* the distance involved in travelling to and from the university either from home or college was prohibitive;
* In addition, students in Auckland had not taken university courses because of the extra expense involved.

Very few (12) of these students had sought advice from college staff. As with the students who were taking university study, they seemed to have decided before they arrived at college not to enrol for university courses in their first year. The majority of these students felt they had not had the best advice to make the right decision, especially the Christchurch students, most of whose colleagues were doing university work. This was not always meant as a criticism of the colleges as it was also felt that schools were also lacking

in this area. The fact that students are required to pre-enrol at the university before they arrive at the college is an added complication. The majority of those students in our interview sample not enrolled at university in their first year intend to take up university study at some stage, usually later in their course.

STUDENT PROFILE 3

Huia is a 25-year-old Maori student. Her father is a fisherman. Before coming to college she went to a state co-educational secondary school but has also worked for several years with the police force. She thinks this experience will be valuable for her as a future teacher. One of her favourite duties with the police was being an instructor. She has also learnt independence and believes in keeping fit and healthy. Her family has been a very important influence on her. She has strong bonds with both parents and close involvement with marae activities. This has helped her to create her own identity. Huia is an active sportswoman, taking part in runs for fun, sports clubs, fishing and boating as well as gardening. She is also a member of a weaving club. Her school experience was important to her because of its strong contribution to Maoritanga through the Maori club. When she was a senior pupil she became responsible for younger pupils.

Huia is concerned for all children but particularly Maori and Pacific Island children. She has always enjoyed being with children and has wanted to teach for as long as she can remember. She wants to influence New Zealand's future by being a teacher. She thinks the education system needs changing but also recognises that a career in education will provide her with security of occupation. Apart from breaks for personal reasons she now expects to make education her lifelong career. When asked, she didn't record any books she had read on educational topics, or refer to any films or TV programmes.

When Huia was interviewed for teaching she had the choice of being interviewed on a marae but did not accept the invitation because she felt she could speak up for herself. She thought the interview panel was looking for mature candidates with good communication skills, capable of decision making and with a wide knowledge of the social scene and an understanding of problems within the education system. She also thought they were interested in people with plenty of hobbies and recreational interests. She herself considers that the most important qualities and abilities of a primary teacher are: confidence, enthusiasm, fitness, flexibility, good decision making powers, and a firm, friendly and fair personality. Huia believes she has all these qualities to above average levels, apart from her ability to make decisions which she rates as average. Huia got her information about the College of Education by telephoning the college. She has formed an impression that it is an exciting place where there are a lot of new and wonderful things to learn and a lot of helpful people who are dedicated to the promotion of an important career. She can't wait to get there. She enjoys learning and is particularly

looking forward to the intellectual stimulation and the teaching practice. She is pleased to be able to continue her own education and organize her own time. She is looking forward to making new friends and to taking part in cultural clubs, sporting groups and the Maori club. The only problem she expects to face is shyness.

Huia is particularly looking forward to course work in oral language, physical education and Maori studies. She is not looking forward to written language, science and drama. She thinks she may need special help with written language, drama, science and reading. At this stage she thinks she would like to teach 8- to 10-year-olds. When asked to draw herself as a classroom teacher, Huia was the only prospective student who described herself as a correspondence teacher, using advanced technology. She drew a very futuristic picture of children learning about alien rights which she described as 'A futuristic view of technical advances and an understanding for unity of everyone. Teachers will never die!'

Huia thinks the key factor in children succeeding at school is the quality of the teacher. She thinks the main cause of school failure is problems at home, particularly if children have medical problems as well. Some children fail because of personality clashes with the teacher. As a teacher she hopes to create a good learning environment for children with plenty of variation within her programme to counteract boredom.

When asked about broader social and educational issues, Huia believes that the school reforms will mean that parents are more closely involved in schools and will want to influence school curriculum. She thinks limited school funding will cause problems for purchasing adequate equipment particularly for children with special needs. She thinks the Treaty of Waitangi is particularly important both at college and in the schools. She thinks students should be more aware of the history of our nation, particularly the loss of mana and independence of the Maori people. Treaty issues should be considered constantly to correct past injustices. However, Huia also believes that the multicultural/bicultural nature of our schools is one of their most positive features. She is also impressed with the wide variety of material resources and the way children with special needs are catered for. On the negative side she believes teacher/pupil ratios are too high and there is a need for more specialised teachers, for example, for deaf children. She regrets what she sees to be a lack of emphasis on physical education. Huia thinks sexism is an issue in New Zealand primary schools and she also thinks some children are racist, largely because of their parents' attitudes. She also thinks parents from lower socio-economic groups are less

well educated than others in the community and this reflects negatively on children's school performance. She sees the schools as having a major responsibility in counteracting this influence. Huia thinks that it is important that New Zealand is a bicultural society. Both the English and Maori languages are important to her. Maori is her first language but English enables her to communicate with the rest of the world. She believes this gives her two identities. She wonders if Tiriti o Waitangi had not been signed whether she '...would be speaking French and "nuking" the Chatham Islands or still running around in grass skirts'. She regards the major challenges both for the school system and New Zealand society as a whole are to settle racial tension and live in harmony.

Six months into the course impressions formed during the orientation ceremony stay with Huia. The powhiri made her feel good. She was impressed by the fact that she observed a Maori student at the welcome dressed in a long coat and wearing sunglasses. As she said, if he'd walked down the street like that 'the cops would have picked him up'. She felt a certain amount of pride that he was at the college comfortable to look like a Maori and not dressing differently for the occasion. She thinks she has an advantage as a mature trainee and feels sorry for younger students who she thinks don't get enough resources and guidance to be able to plan lessons confidently and teach effectively. She feels angry when other trainees tell her they can't see the reason why Maori language and culture should be taught in schools. This is racist. She also feels the course should be giving students more information about the school reforms and the possible impact for trainees.

She has chosen to do physical education as an option and hopes to major in it. She's also taking Maori studies for her own personal enjoyment. She's not particularly satisfied with the in-college assessment of her work but is full of praise for the feedback she got from her associate on teaching practice section. She decided not to take university work this year because she was worried about the college workload. She doesn't think she had enough advice about university work to make the best decision. She didn't know, for example, that she would have been eligible for special admission. She isn't sure about the advantages for her of going to university.

When Huia came into the college she felt she already had good teaching skills and leadership skills. She also felt confident with other people. She thinks she's been able to guide some of the younger trainees. It was so long since she had been at school she was unsure of her strengths and weaknesses as far as particular subject areas go, but she's now become more aware of what is expected and is coping well.

Huia doesn't really feel the lecturers know her very well apart from most of them knowing her name. Her only real problem is understanding the educational theory. The only college club she is involved in is Kapa Haka, although she has continued with her weaving club out of college and is also taking part in civil defence.

Huia came to college on the teachers college bursary but she is also supported by a partner so she feels no need of other employment. She thinks that most trainees get enough money and that those who work feel tired and fall behind.

She felt the orientation programme was a 'bit of a joke' and says most students were uptight about the computer error which made the whole process very confusing. However, overall she's enjoying the course. She feels she's become more open with people since she's been at college. She understands children better and has been helped to prepare lessons and to organise classroom activities spontaneously.

STUDENT PROFILE 4

Brent is an 18-year-old school leaver from a state single sex school who has enrolled to do the three-year course. His father is a sheep farmer and his mother is a primary school teacher. While still at school he has had a wide range of casual jobs which he thinks has made him more adaptable towards people. His experience as a paraplegic's buddy on school camps has made Brent more sympathetic to the difficulties faced by a less able person and enabled him to see how disabled people overcome their handicaps. His mother's experience as a teacher has helped him to appreciate the load carried by teachers and he has also had practical experience on school camps with his mother's class of intermediate children. At secondary school Brent was a school prefect and also a reading tutor. Both of these responsibilities gave him experience at communicating with younger pupils. He has also mixed with all age groups through swimming and other sporting interests.

Brent was influenced by both his parents and by other teachers in his decision to take up teaching. His other experiences with children are also important. Brent regards a teacher's job as a satisfying one and hopes through his work to influence New Zealand's future.

When Brent was interviewed for selection he thought that members of the selection panel were mostly looking for personal qualities in the applicants such as maturity, confidence, self-motivation and an ability to get along with others. Brent is particularly looking forward to teaching practice section and to the educational theory. He will also be away from home for the first time and is keen to show his independence, to be responsible for organising his own time, and to continue his own education. He expects to make new friends and to take part in sporting activities and the drama production. At this stage he can't think of any problems he is likely to have.

Brent doesn't think there are any areas of the curriculum where he will need special help, although he is not looking forward to computer studies. His favourite subjects are art, physical education and science.

Brent enjoys all children and has no particular preference for the age group he would like to teach. He drew a picture of himself as a classroom teacher with a group of 11-year-olds sitting on a mat having a general discussion. He is keen to motivate children to learn by making learning enjoyable. Brent thinks that good teachers love children, enjoy learning themselves, are patient, adaptable, and have a quiet firm manner. He believes he has all these qualities to a high degree. He attributes school failure to poor home circumstances and low self-esteem on the part of children. He

thinks relaxed teacher/pupil relationships are important in the classroom and that children learn best when they enjoy the company of the people they are with.

Brent doesn't think sexism, racism or socio-economic class are issues in New Zealand primary schools. Nor does he believe the Treaty of Waitangi should have any particular significance either at the college or later for him as a classroom teacher. He is looking forward to the year 2000 as a time when New Zealand will have full employment and no racial problems.

Six months into the college course Brent really likes it although it is totally different to what he thought it was going to be like. There's certainly a different atmosphere from his Catholic high school. Because his brother goes to university, Brent thought the college would be more like that. But it's not at all. It's more of a family atmosphere because students are always with the same group - more so even than at secondary school where there were lots of different options and classes and pupils might only be together as a group three times a week.

Brent is enjoying most of the course work. He finds in education, for example, that he is learning all sorts of things he didn't realise he had to know - particularly different kinds of lesson plans. He's impressed with the emphasis in maths on making it enjoyable for children so that they develop positive attitudes to the subject, but he would like more help with the teaching of maths. He particularly would like more time with the maths equipment but it is only set up for lectures. He thinks he is not alone in this. Brent hasn't started multicultural studies yet but will be doing so in the second half of the year. He's a bit disappointed in some of the comments he's heard about the course from other students who are glad they have finished the course. They thought it was Maori studies rather than multicultural studies, and said it was boring. Brent had trouble choosing his options because there were so many courses he was interested in. He settled for science and physical education, both of which he is enjoying.

Brent is satisfied with the assessments that have been made of his work. They make him feel good. He finds it hard to comment on whether there is much opportunity for self-assessment because he feels students tend to only do something once so it's a bit hard to tell whether you've improved or not.

Brent is not doing university work. As with many students who decide not to take university courses in their first year, he thought he should find out first how he coped with the college requirements. If he had gone he would have had to make a special application because of his qualifications and when he found that out it was too late. He's quite pleased that he decided not to

go to university as other people who are in the hostel are having trouble keeping up with the workload. He thinks he will give it a go next year.

Considering the college course is only six months underway Brent thinks the college is addressing its own stated objectives pretty well. He also thinks he's been able to use the skills and abilities he came in with. Although he thinks lecturers are quite prepared to help on an individual basis finding a time to do so is difficult. Right now, for example, so many of the lecturers are school visiting for second-year students, so first years can't get hold of them.

Brent is obviously getting a lot out of the course and is pleased with his own development. He thinks he's more disciplined and self-motivated than he has ever been before.

STUDENTS' OVERALL IMPRESSIONS OF THEIR INITIATION TO COURSES OF TEACHER EDUCATION

We stated in our research objectives for the first phase of the project that we intended to record students' perceptions of their initiation to their courses of teacher education and to discuss the 'key events' in students' early experiences at college. The material in this section of the report is taken from the student interviews after they had been at college for only six months. It includes students' responses to questions about the orientation programmes; their overall reaction to the college courses; problems, issues and 'key events' as they identify them; and some students' views as to why some courses and lecturers are effective and others are not.

ORIENTATION PROGRAMMES

Each of the three colleges ran an orientation programme. They differed markedly from each other and could in themselves be the subejct of a mini-research project. We have confined our comments to summarising student responses to a series of specific questions focusing on the 'least' and the 'most' helpful aspects of the orientation programme.

AUCKLAND

With the exception of two or three students, all those interviewed thought an orientation programme was necessary.

Positive Comments

Although there were students who said they 'could not remember much about the programme' or that it had 'not made a great impression', most had positive comments to make. These centred almost entirely on one aspect of the orientation programme:

* Subject demonstrations: Favourable comments were made by about two-thirds of the students who were impressed with the course demonstrations within departments. The fact that in some cases second-year students as well as staff answered queries was helpful.

Other comments made by smaller numbers of students (usually about four or five) were:

* the opportunity to meet other students. (This was markedly less the case than, for example, in Wellington).
* being shown around the college - the geography.
* introductory talk to 'base' group.

Negative Comments

* About a third of the students referred to the orientation programme being 'disorganised' and 'chaotic' and mentioned problems they had finding their way about, and finding out what was going on.

'Coming from school you just think, "Wow!"'

* Timetabling difficulties were referred to by another group of students and the difficulty they had in understanding what they would be expected to do during the year, or over three years.

'I had to make important decisions. I didn't know what I could cope with, what I'd be doing.'

* Graduates had a feeling that the orientation programme was geared to undergraduates and that they should have had a separate programme.
* Some thought there was a lack of social and sporting activities which would have enabled them to meet other students.

'More a feeling of being lost.'

* One or two felt there should have been a chance to get into schools.
* Although most students found the subject demonstrations helpful, there were students who felt that lecturers 'pushed' their particular curriculum area and found it hard to make choices because they did not have an overview of the college programme.

WELLINGTON

Overall, students were considerably more likely to make positive than negative comments about the two-week orientation programme (referred to as Block 0). Virtually all students saw the need for an orientation programme although nearly a third thought that the programme was too long and needed to be revised or restructured.

Positive Comments

Postive comments centred on two aspects:

* The opportunity to meet other students of their year. There were also a few references to meeting staff.
* The opportunity to visit schools so early in the programme.

Other comments made by two or three students in each case were:

* taking part in the powhiri
* the chance to look around the college
* getting to know a little about the college courses and resources.

Negative Comments

The negative comments were less easy to classify but the two main criticisms were:

* too much time spent sitting around discussing things
* timetabling mix-ups.

Other students were critical of:

* the student-initiated activities which they regarded as immature
* games and activities which they regarded as a waste of time
* Block 0 reports not being used
* lack of information about choices available
* the large numbers of people present meant that some missed out on being part of the official welcome
* wasted time: boring.

CHRISTCHURCH

Nearly all the students thought an orientation programme was necessary but the one that they had been subjected to was an almost total disaster. It was the topic on which we questioned students about which there was almost complete agreement:

> 'It actually turned me right off coming to college.'
>
> 'It was so slack that it almost set the tone for what you were expecting for the rest of the semester.'
>
> 'The auditorium just put me to sleep - the days were too long without any interaction. Infinitely forgettable.'

Positive Comments

Tha only positive comments came from a few students who referred to:

* The value of meeting others of their year, particularly in tutor groups.
* Visiting schools.
* Isolated references to particular speakers, eg student health.
* Limited opportunity to find out about courses.

Negative Comments

Negative comments focused around:

* The unrelieved nature of the lectures in the auditorium
* Problems with the Maori welcome:
  - Students could not understand what was going on. They would have

liked some explanation and translation.

- The arrangements seemed very makeshift - the welcoming party of students had not been pre-arranged.
- It was a strange way for a largely Pakeha group to start their training - feelings of tokenism.

OVERALL STUDENT IMPRESSIONS OF THE COLLEGE COURSE

The next section of this report summarises by college the student responses to two questions:

1. *What are your overall impressions of the college and the course so far? What do you think of the experiences you've had in these first few months?*

2. *Can you tell me, thinking right back to the first day you arrived at college, whether there are any experiences or events or people that particularly stand out in your mind since you've been at college?*

AUCKLAND COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

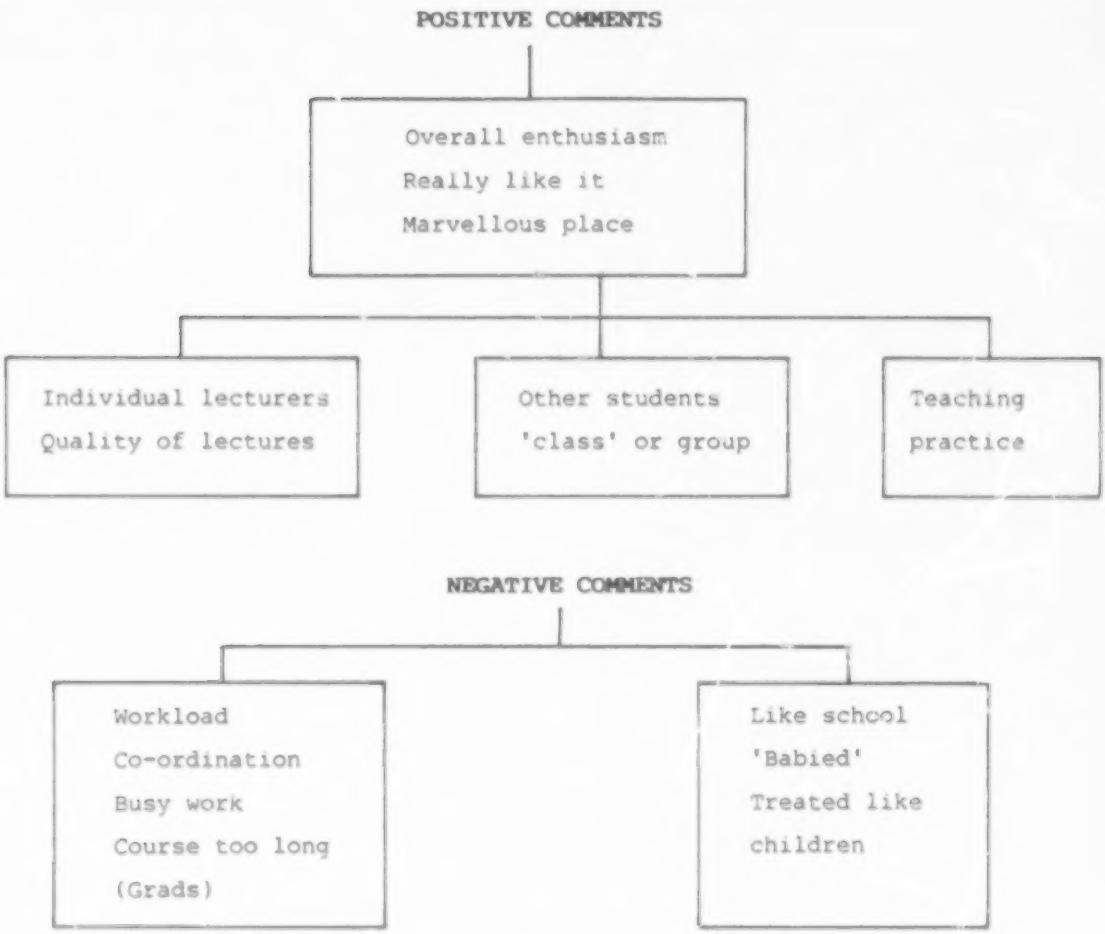
Students had problems making general comments. As one graduate from Auckland put it:

> 'It varies according to which department you are talking about. Some departments are very badly organised and you go to lectures and come out feeling that nothing has happened in terms of increasing your teaching methods and skills. It's just a waste of time. Other departments, eg phys. ed, are outstanding in that they target all their teaching towards the teaching programme and developing yourself as a teacher.'

The responses of Auckland students to the first question is summarised in Diagram 4.

DIAGRAM 4

Overall Impression of the College Course: Auckland



Positive Comments

Most students opened the interview with a very positive comment (more so than in Wellington and Christchurch). Overall the positive comments outnumbered the negative by about five to one. The most enthusiastic students think college is a 'marvellous place' or 'absolutely wonderful'. Others are 'really enjoying it' and 'having fun'.

Following on from these overall appreciative comments students were almost equally likely to refer to the:

* quality of lecturers and lectures
* other students, particularly their 'class' or group
* teaching practice section

Typical comments were:

> 'The atmosphere of the place is really good ... people seem to get on really well with each other - especially in the primary field. Everyday you meet someone new. I can't believe it - there's so many people here!'
>
> 'I envisaged more of a polytech set up - just come along to lectures and that was it. They seem here to take more of an interest in the students. The lecturers are more prepared to give you a hand if you need it. The whole structure of the place seems to be geared towards the students themselves.'
>
> 'I think all the lecturers and basically the whole place have got a lot to offer students who are training to be teachers. I think it's really interesting being here and I really enjoy it. I haven't missed one day yet because I look forward to coming every day. The work isn't hard but it's intense and there's a lot to do and because it's something different from what I've been doing at school I enjoy it. I enjoy the practical side on section.'

Negative Comments

Negative comments (and there were only about 15 from those students interviewed) referred either to being treated like school children and 'babied', or to the workload which some felt contained a certain amount of 'busy work', was not always well co-ordinated (assignments and tests coming all together); and while there was a lot to cover the level was a bit easy - not as intellectually stimulating as the 6th and 7th form had been. Several graduates said they felt time was wasted and the course too long. It was too spread out during the week, and could perhaps be condensed into one year.

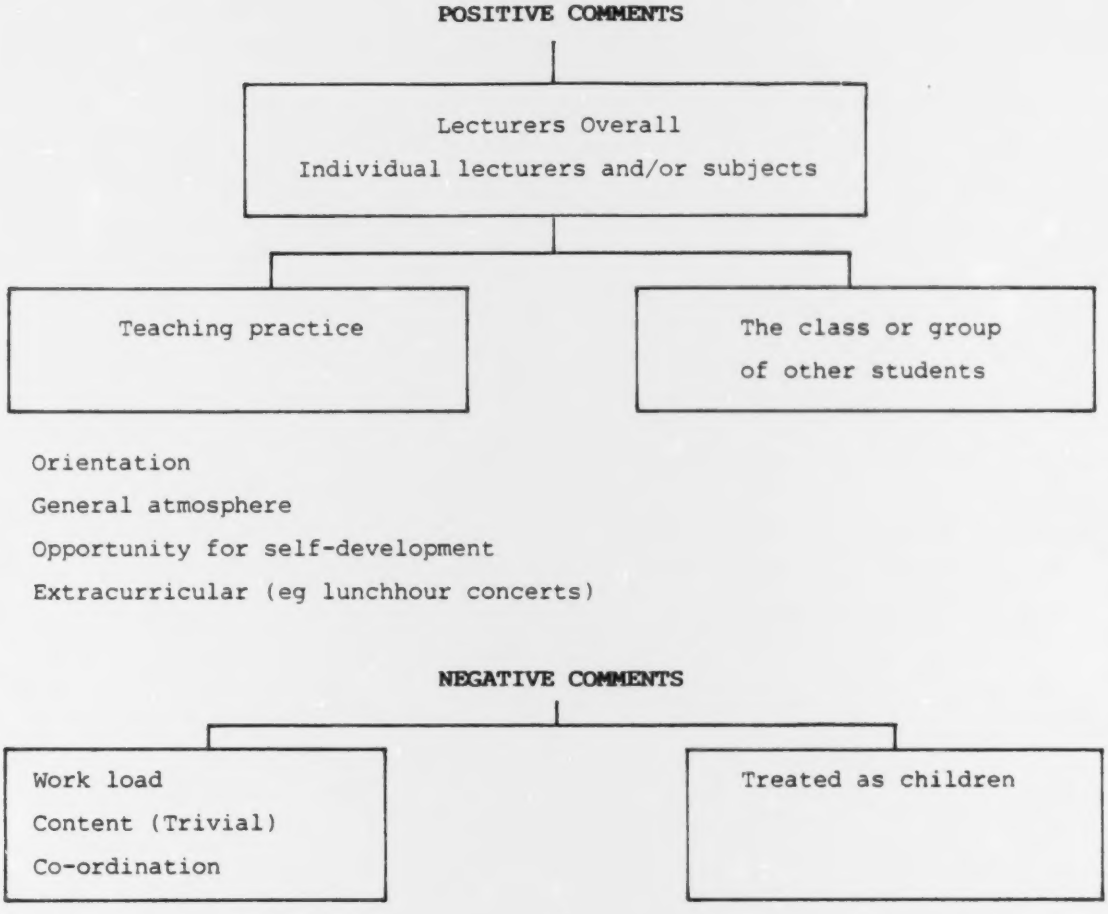
KEY EVENTS

Virtually all the students singled out 'key' events. Once again the positive far outweighed the negative (whereas seven of the 41 students interviewed did not specify any positive key events, more than 20 had no negative comments to make). Not surprisingly the comments students made about 'key events' at the end of their interview echoed the comments they had made when they discussed their general reaction to the college and course at the beginning of the interview. The students' comments are summarised in Diagram 5.

interview. The students' comments are summarised in Diagram 5.

DIAGRAM 5

Key Events: Auckland



The quality of lecturers and lectures stands out in the minds of students. The interviewers got the impression that there were many who could have been singled out by students but the ones who were referred to were, for example, science lecturers who have been 'top notch'; the education lecturer who 'gave us shock treatment at first but now we respect him quite a lot and we're also friends with him'; and the language lecturer who has a 'brilliant personality'; the Maori studies tutor who 'takes a personal interest'; and the

maths lecturer who 'talks in words we can understand'. Other comments about lecturers were more general, for example:

> 'I've also had a lecturer - well the positive comments he's come out with all the time - just pumped them into me and every student in my class. It made me feel so good about myself and I'm always striving to do better...'

The other 'positive' key events are mostly self-explanatory but one student reaction needs to be elaborated on. A strong feeling came through from the Auckland students (more so than for students in the other colleges), that they were enjoying being part of their 'class' which met together for a number of subjects. The sense of belonging and the importance of group dynamics was clear. Several school leavers felt that this was so compared with the more fragmented experience they had had as 6th and 7th formers. One student commented particularly that the 'class' was a more cohesive group and more significant in the lives of students than the tutor groups.

The negative key events were virtually the same as the negative overall comments discussed earlier. An exception were the handful of students who reacted negatively to aspects of the biculturalism programme, particularly the multiculturalism course. This has been discussed elsewhere but once again a few students expressed the view that some of the Maori lecturers were anti-Pakeha and were not interested in the viewpoint of Pakeha students, some of whom felt 'threatened by the stance of the college' as reflected in the multicultural course.

WELLINGTON COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

The positive comments made by Wellington students referred to similar aspects of the college and course as those made by Auckland students. Both the positive and negative comments are summarised in Diagram 6.

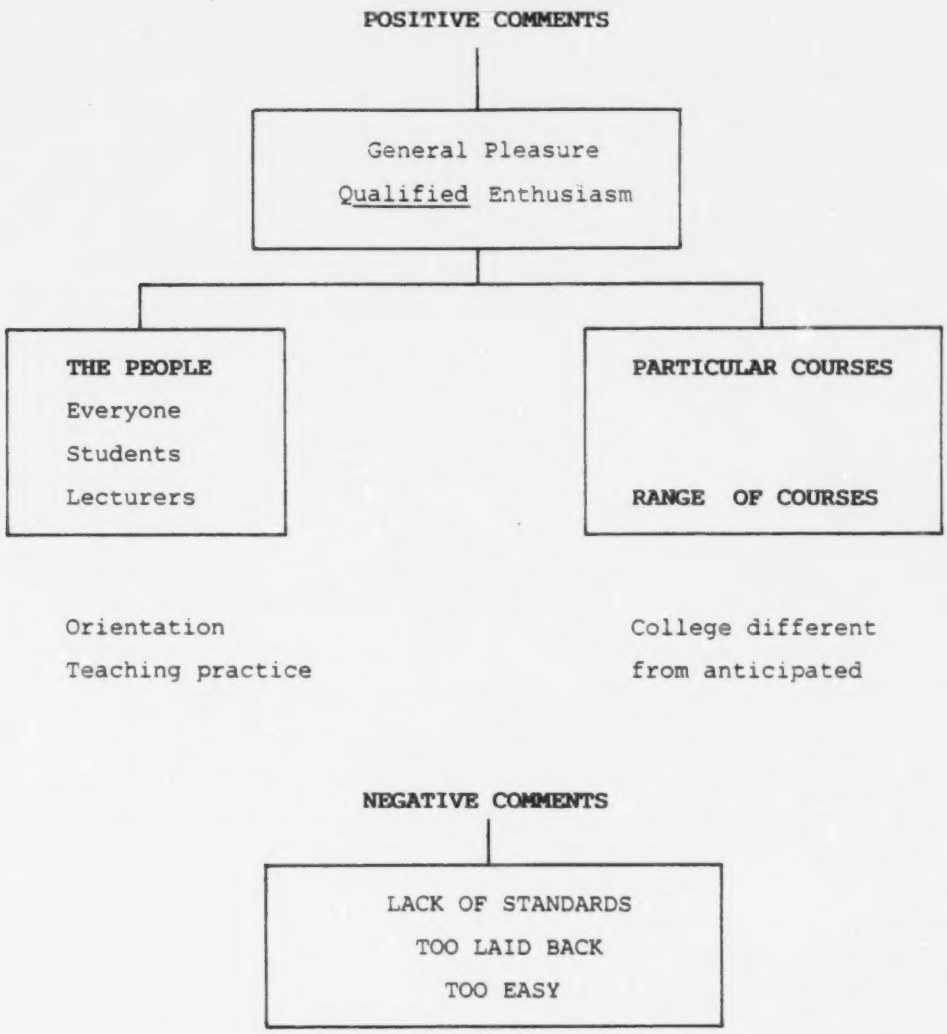
Positive Comments

Most students opened the interview with a positive comment - positive comments outnumbered negative by about three to one. One of the most positive students commented:

> 'It's a good place to be. I enjoy being here. I find the atmosphere very positive, supportive, friendly and comfortable. I don't feel as though I'm in an institution. I don't feel as though I've had to change my style particularly. A very positive reaction.'

DIAGRAM 6

Overall Impression of the College Course: Wellington



More commonly students qualified their enthusiasm:

'I'm pretty impressed. Enjoying some aspects'.

'It's been good. I enjoy it. It fluctuates, but I'm enjoying in the main'.

'On the whole positive. Little things don't quite jell - you make the most of it. There's a lot to do here.'

Students who made positive comments tended to refer to one of two things:

* The friendliness of the people - students and lecturers. In the words of two students:

  'The thing that stands out most about this place are the people.'

  'I'm finding the people here are great. There's a real variety of backgrounds - lots of different ideas which I really enjoy.'

* The range and quality of courses.

  Two students in discussing the courses commented:

  'Really good learning place - you get other people's points of view: bounce ideas off others.'

  'I love college. All the courses I've done have been really interesting. All of them I've come out of "thinking". You can't always put down what it is you've learnt - like in some professional studies classes, you think well I haven't really learnt anything specific. But the classes are really relevant to teaching. Some students complain because they think they haven't learnt anything, but I think there are a lot of political issues involved in teaching that seem to be addressed at college in a non-threatening way. They're doing really well.'

Negative Comments

Although about a third of the students made positive comments about their general reaction to the college courses, an equal number had critical things to say. In the view of these students the college was too 'laid back', the courses were 'too easy' and there was a lack of 'standards of excellence'. The view was that people who don't put much time and effort into the course still pass. As one student put it she was 'worried about the calibre of teachers who will just fall out of this place'. Or, as another said, 'Absenteeism is the only way to fail'.

Wellington obviously has an image problem. Four of the students spoke to us about negative views of the college course they had heard before they arrived but which in their view had not materalised. These are worth quoting in full:

'Different from what I'd expected - impressions from other people. I'd been worried that it wouldn't be very challenging, that the course would be easy and that I would be surrounded with young people straight from school - it would be like going back to school - not like that at all.'

'I had heard quite a bit about it before I came - it was a pretty laid-back sort of place. I'd heard you wouldn't have exams like other colleges such as Palmerston North and I have found it's easy enough to get by. I don't think you're extended all that much as far as workload is concerned. I quite like it because I've got university work as well so the combination works out pretty well.'

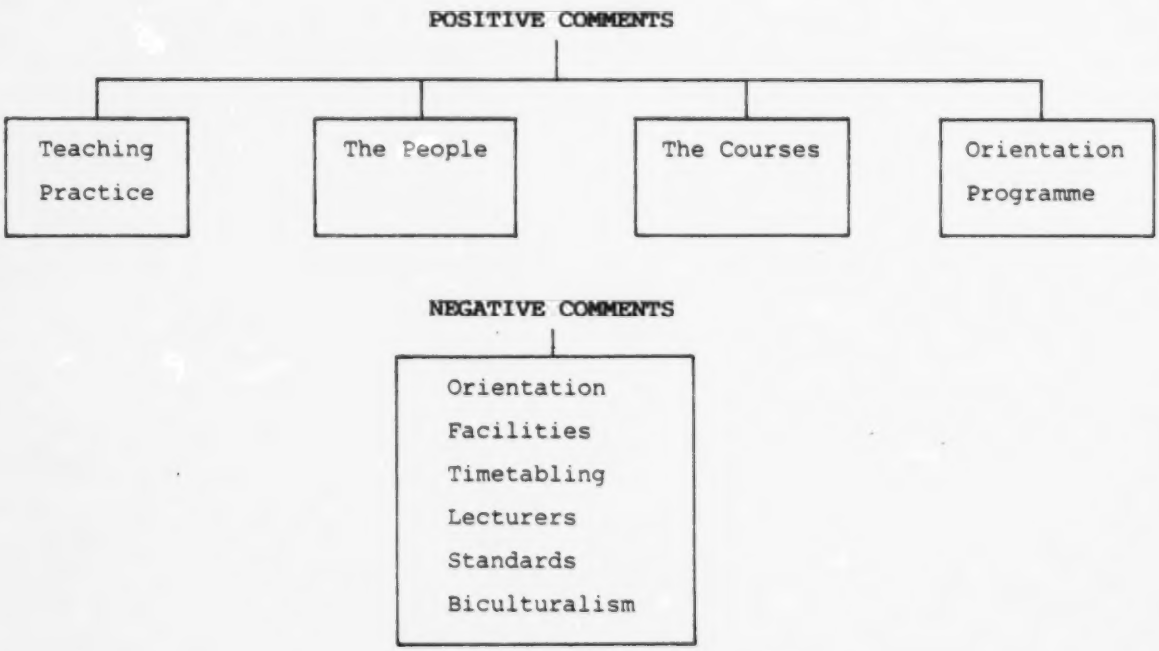
'I must admit I was a bit apprehensive to start with. I was told about the emphasis on biculturalism and coming from an all girls Catholic school where we've had no Maori lessons or anything to do with Maori culture, knowing how immersed we'd be here I was a bit worried - the idea that because I was Pakeha and middle class I wouldn't fit in, but I don't think that any more. I just love it.'

KEY EVENTS

All but two Wellington students singled out key events in their course so far. All those who responded referred to 'positive' events but 20 of the 34 interviewed made no reference to 'negative' events. Both 'positive' and 'negative' responses are summarised in Diagram 7.

DIAGRAM 7

Key Events: Wellington



Positive Comments

The positive comments divided almost equally into the four categories shown in Diagram 7, about 10 students making favourable comments in each category. A few students also made general comments saying the 'key event' for them was 'the total place', or 'the feeling of belonging', of 'starting a new life' or 'the variety - every day is different'. Examples of comments under the other headings are:

* Teaching practice:

'Teacher training experience is the best thing. That is where you do your learning and that is just *the* key event.'

'I can't really say enough about teaching experience. It's the greatest. I really enjoy it.'

* The People:

Comments divided almost equally between those referring to students - their variety, the support they gave and the pleasure of socialising with them - and comments students made about staff, usually by singling out individual lecturers:

'The dean is very helpful: she really cares for all students.'

'The lecturer in professional studies - encouragement informative help with college work.'

'Advisers always make sure you know they are there to help.'

* The Courses:

With such a range of courses available it is not surprising that the positive comments about courses are difficult to categorise. Three or four students commented on the value of the range of courses and the style by which they were run - particularly the emphasis on discussion and 'bouncing ideas of each other'. Others singled out individual courses which had excited them: music and dance in the classroom; science ('A lot more exciting than I ever thought it could be. I love science'); Kapa Haka (particularly the mix of everyone in together); art and craft ('That's like a big treat'); Maori studies ('I've learnt something really different'); choir ('Definitely a great experience. I think relatively the choir stands out most').

* Orientation:

Compared with the other two colleges, the first day at Wellington stands out for some people, particularly the powhiri and welcome onto the marae. Favourable comments were made by Pakeha students, but one Maori commented:

> 'When I first arrived here and we were taken down to the quad, I couldn't believe that I was here - there were so many people and I didn't know anyone ... Going down and being welcomed. That's one thing that will always stick in my mind. I was so proud of myself and I thought, "Gosh, I wish Mum was here to see me do this!" And I've had a lot of fun since.'

Negative Comments

Not only did relatively few students refer to 'negative' key events, but those who did tended to make individual references to a range of different aspects of the course. These included the following:

* Orientation:

> 'Welcomed in Maori which I didn't understand; there was no translation compared with school. Hard to sit patiently in seat if you don't know what it's about.'

* Timetabling:

> 'Mix-up at beginning of year. Hectic first day - original timetable lost.'

> 'Juggling your timetable would have to be the biggest pain in the butt - constraints.'

* Facilities:

> 'The actual places to be are a bit minimal. The cafe is crowded, the queues are long and hot water often isn't hot for your tea - and sitting on those park benches!'

> 'Intake larger than previous years. Meet in room that's too small - not enough chairs.'

* Lecturers:

> 'Disappointed with the way some teach.'

> 'Advisers - the advisers responsible for us are too busy. When I asked for help with my course of study I was advised to do what I like.'

* **Standards:**

* **Biculturalism:**

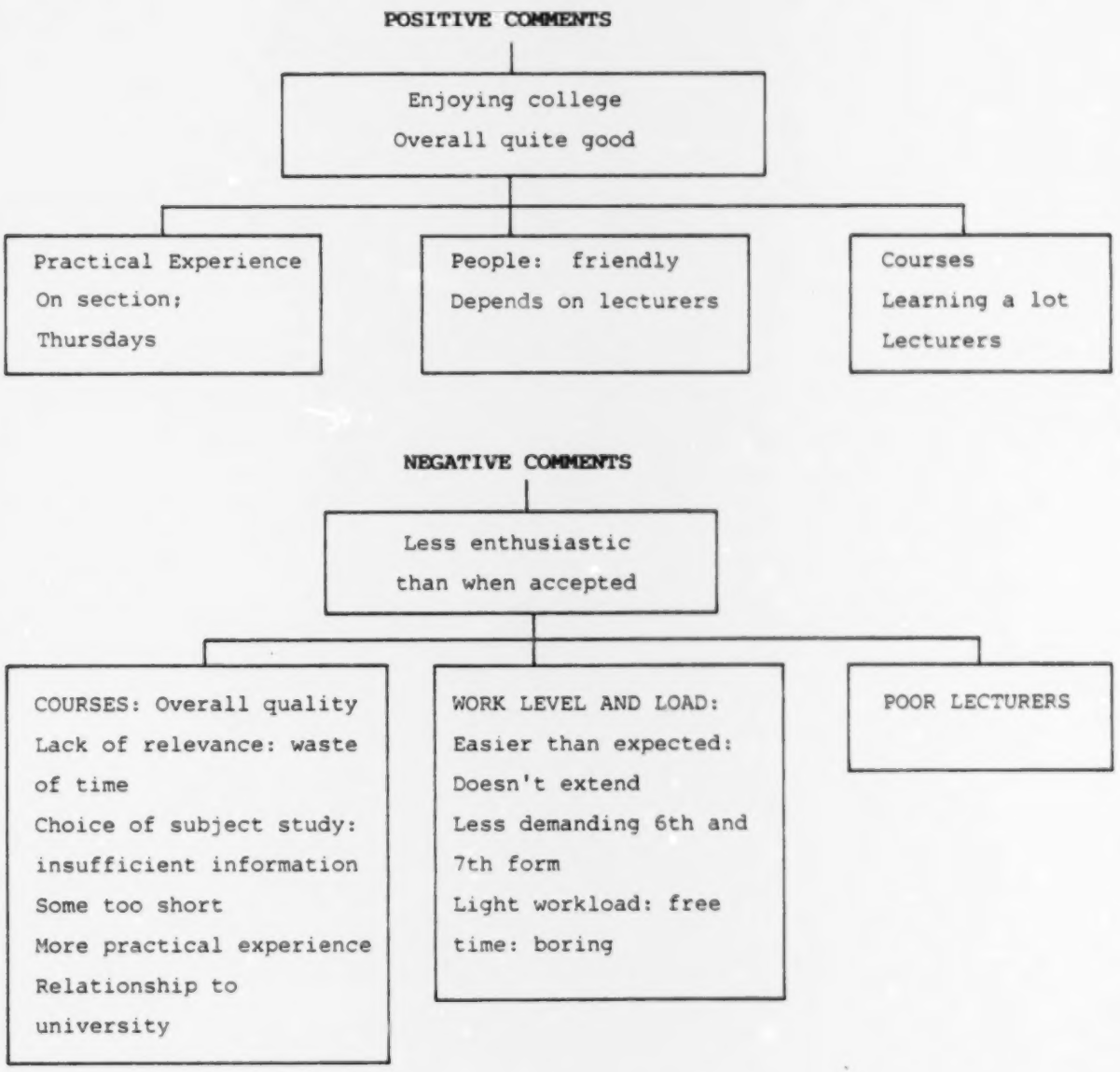
  Lack of Maori perspective in many classes.

CHRISTCHURCH COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

The responses of Christchurch students are summarised in Diagram 8.

DIAGRAM 8

Overall Impressions of the College Course: Christchurch



Positive Comments

Most students opened the interview with a positive comment - they were 'really enjoying it', or 'overall it's quite good'. Others had 'mixed feelings':

> '... sometimes I really enjoy it and I think, "Wow, this is me", and then there's lots of times when I think, "What am I doing here?" It seems really pointless.'

A few students went straight into critical comments and raised issues later referred to by most of the others. The general impression was one of muted pleasure - certainly less enthusiastic than, for example, students at Auckland.

Students who made favourable comments tended to refer to one of three things.

* Their enjoyment of teaching practice.
* The friendliness of students and staff.
* The quality and range of the courses.

Examples of comments:

> 'Great, I've really enjoyed it. I've enjoyed the range of subjects. I've had two years of university just in specific subjects but over here it's completely different, a bit of everything. The section practice I've found the highlight so far. But no. I've enjoyed the courses.'

> 'I think it offers a really good range of courses. I'm really enjoying it that way. I think some of the courses need to be looked at with relevance to teaching. In the classroom I found in a lot of subjects I've only been able to pull a few things out that have actually been relevant to me, of any use. But other than that I'm really enjoying it. Just the variety, all the different subjects and the things offered.'

> 'Since I've been here, well, I have learnt a heck of a lot. I feel more confident in myself as a person as well as a potential teacher. I've met some very good people who will possibly be potential colleagues in the future so I've got a lot of positive feelings towards people who I am associating with. Yes, my initial reaction would be a positive feeling towards it.'

Negative Comments

One clear message from the student comments is that most came to college highly motivated to train to be teachers. They expected to be stimulated and challenged and to start preparing to be teachers from the outset of the course. Most of the negative comments can be attributed to the fact that, for one reason or another, the course did not always live up to student

expectations.

Negative comments fell into three broad categories:

* Criticism of courses
* Criticism of the work level and load
* Criticism of individual lecturers.

We have attempted to look at the critical comments in the light of the college's own review document[20] particularly the stated underlying principles and philosophy (pp. 4-5). We note, for example, the review's acknowledgement that 'structures' should be 'more readily comprehensible' to students. The following quote indicates how far the present situation falls short of this ideal:

> 'It's a very funny system they've got here. They've got half-year course or half-semester course, half and full semester courses which are half-year. They've also got courses which run for a term, which is a third of a year, and they've got courses which run for a quarter of a year, which is about two-thirds of a term. I find it very difficult to know what's happening every fortnight because I'm not really sure.'

The review document acknowledges the need for theory and practice to be better integrated in all programmes. Students currently complain that there are not enough practically based courses and that courses lack relevance to their classroom experience. They are also critical of the length of some courses, which they consider to be too short to allow students to master the course content. Music was one example given. This concern of students needs to be borne in mind in the movement towards modular courses as recommended in the review.

Even after six months at the college, students were 'very hazy' about the place of subject studies in the overall college programme. Students were critical of the lack of advice about which subject to choose, what courses involved and whether they should be choosing subjects they intended to carry on in subsequent years.

When we interviewed students we anticipated that those taking university courses might consider college courses less demanding. What we didn't expect was that students would compare their present workload with their previous year at school, and find it less challenging. As the students put it:

> 'Some of the courses have been interesting but it feels as though you're still at school and the courses don't extend you. I've just come out of

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20. *Review of Christchurch College of Education Programmes, 1989: draft.* Christchurch: Christchurch College of Education.

high school. I feel that a lot of the time that I'm covering things that I'm not finding too difficult. I don't have to think and that makes it a bit boring.'

'The workload's nothing compared with last year. This year has slackened off compared to 7th form. I did more work at school than at TC. I expected to be snowed under but there's heaps of free time and the lecturers and the classes - you don't miss a lot if you're not there. You say, "I'll get the notes", but half the time there aren't notes - you just don't do anything.'

'There is a very light workload while being the first year I thought it would be quite heavy but the work's been very basic and not a lot of it, which can be a good thing if you're not into work. I found it a bit boring in the first year, other than that it's a nice place - quite friendly. The lecturers are nice - they get your name every now and then.'

Again and again student comments referred to the quality of individual lecturers, with particular criticism of those who had been at college 'for ever' and were not in touch with the classroom. As one student put it,

'Some have got the head knowledge but they can't put it across to us. We find them so boring.'

The importance students attach to the quality of individual lecturers makes it clear that no matter how frequently college programmes are 'reviewed' and reorganised, students will tend to judge their college experience by the performance of individual lecturers.

The relationship of the college courses to those at university is considered elsewhere (see p. 82), but the issue was sufficiently important to students for a number of them to raise the lack of co-ordination between college and university courses and the difficulties of coping with the dual workload, in their opening remarks.

KEY EVENTS

All but six of the 32 students interviewed in Christchurch identified 'key events'. Those who did not thought the experience was rather monochromatic:

'I don't know. Most of it to me has been rather unimpressionable. It's been pretty well just flow with the tide and keep up with assignments. I can't say that any one area is worse than others.'

Not surprisingly, in singling out 'key events', students echoed the comments they had made at the beginning of the interview when they described their overall impression of the college. Students were much more likely to make positive than negative comments. (The ratio of positive to negative was

about three to one.)

Positive Comments

Apart from general comments such as 'Nothing negative about the place' or 'It's just an overall positive feeling', the positive comments fell into three categories:

- Teaching practice
- Particular college courses
- The people in the college.

Teaching Practice

More than half of the students interviewed listed their teaching practice or visiting schools on Thursday morning as being the 'key event' so far during their training. The practical experience 'had the most impact' and helped students to see the relevance of their course work. Some were reassured that they 'got on well with the children' and saw at firsthand how children behave in the classroom. One student summarised her view by saying:

> 'The associate teacher - it's just amazing because before that I wasn't sure. I thought is this really what I want to do? But I had a brilliant section and while I was on section I knew that's what I wanted to do and yet when I came back to college and just sort of got back into a routine, I said, "Oh, I don't know, four years at this, you know, it just seems a bit much."'

College Courses

As we interviewed only 32 students and the courses they took varied, it is not possible to single out particular courses for comment, except to say that the two courses which received most favourable comment were a Maori block course (referred to by five students) and Education courses (referred to by four students). Students regarded the Maori block course as a 'highlight' because of the 'neat atmosphere' created by the lecturers and the 'tremendous community spirit'. One student comment about the excellence of an education lecturer is worth quoting in full because of the description of the varied teaching style:

> 'My tutor for education is excellent. He's really good. He really sets out to teach you something and expects you to learn, he gives you a lot of work and for me that's good, because otherwise I just don't do anything but if I've got work I learn. It's not just writing and that. You do seminars and you can do it in a play or you can do it in a film

or you can just do any way you want. It's more active participation on our part than a lot of subjects and I learn better that way. I just start to switch off if there's someone talking and I'm just supposed to write the important points down.'

Courses which received positive mentions by two or three students were maths, science, social science, reading and drama.

The People

About a quarter of the students interviewed considered the people on the course to be a 'key event'. A few referred to lecturers but more referred to the pleasure of mixing with the student group.

Negative Comments

About a third of the students referred to negative 'key events'. It is interesting to note that although teaching practice was regarded as the most positive aspect of college life by more than half the students, none had any critical comments to make about teaching practice. Nearly all the negative comments were about individual lecturers or about courses. It was often hard to distinguish between one and the other because the two are linked. If a subject is not liked it is almost invariably because of the way it is taught. Most negative comments were about the aging male lecturing staff but included comments already discussed, such as the workload and treatment of students as school pupils.

IMPACT OF COLLEGE COURSES ON STUDENTS

The students interviewed were asked two questions about the impact on them of the college course:

> *What impact, if any, has the course had on you personally? Do you think you have changed in any way because of your participation in the course?*
>
> *And professionally, in terms of becoming a teacher, what are the most important things you've learned so far?*

PERSONAL IMPACT OF COURSE

After six months, most students, regardless of college, thought the course had had an impact on them personally. (Six students in Christchurch, five in Auckland and three in Wellington did *not* think they had changed).

The student comments tended to be idiosyncratic and it was difficult to generalise from their responses, particularly after such a short time at college. However, students tended to refer to increased maturity and confidence, and becoming more aware and broadminded. Examples of student comments are:

> 'I knew before I started that I had heaps to learn but the more I learn the more I realise I have to learn. I had some pretty airy-fairy notions about teaching and I've been brought down to earth. I've met lots of different people, all ages. Each student who's here I've learnt something from. I want to be the best teacher I know how to be and if any place can do it this place can.' (Wellington)

> 'More aware generally because there has been more discussion and I've thought about my opinions a lot more. We didn't do that at school and it took me a while to get used to it.' (Wellington)

> 'I'm more confident. Also more interested in what's going on not only in New Zealand but in the world. And more aware of the things around us in different ways - like mathematics ways, artistic ways, musical ways - everything!' (Wellington)

> 'Easier to put myself in a leadership role - more confident. The people are so nice and easy to get along with and all here for the same reason. Practice in leadership role. Section really built up my confidence because I got good reports from my associate and visiting lecturer.' (Wellington)

> Yes! I have changed - grown up really quickly. Totally different outlook. Aware of different things that go on in schools but it goes beyond schools.' (Auckland)

> 'Yes, definitely in the sense that I'm feeling a lot happier about myself. I want to be a teacher and I'm enjoying what I'm doing and that is a big plus for me.' (Auckland)

> 'Opened my eyes a bit more to what's going on around me. Only because I'm mixing with people from different backgrounds. SES/ethnic. They make you think in the lectures, so I guess I've become more open-minded.' (Auckland)

> 'Probably more aware of myself and more aware of what goes on in the schools and what goes on in children's lives especially. Where I was working before, it was just get up in the morning, go to work, go home and forget about it type thing. But here you're thinking about it all the time. Even when you walk up a road you're thinking about the different things. It just doesn't happen in one place. You can look everywhere and see something that you've learned.' (Christchurch)

'Opened my views. Became more aware of a lot of things especially sexism and racism and things like that. Being positive instead of negative. If you've had a tendency to be negative at teachers college you learn to be positive to the children and then you yourself start becoming positive to others and that's really helpful.' (Christchurch)

'I don't think I've changed but you're able to see yourself more clearly. The things were always there in me but I just didn't know it. Until you do the course, and then you find out "Oh, I can do this". Like the art and that. You surprise yourself. And also getting along with people. I don't think you change, you just develop yourself - your personality, yourself. You grow up heaps. It's quite funny going back home and seeing your school friends and think, "Oh, was I like that?" I suppose that's also to do with having adults in your tutor group as well. The people in my tutor group, they're all really neat.' (Christchurch)

Increased confidence for a number of students related to their ability to speak in front of others, and to having more confidence with children as a result of teaching practice section.

Whereas students who had come straight from school spoke of having 'grown up', of getting to know themselves better and of being in control of their own learning, more mature students referred to such things as realising that you can change direction in mid-life without too many sleepless nights, the relaxed environment compared with previous high-stress jobs, being challenged by the 'first academic input in 10 years' to wishing you could bring up your children again now that you know all the things you 'did wrong as a mother'! One or two of the males spoke of the experience of being in a predominantly female environment:

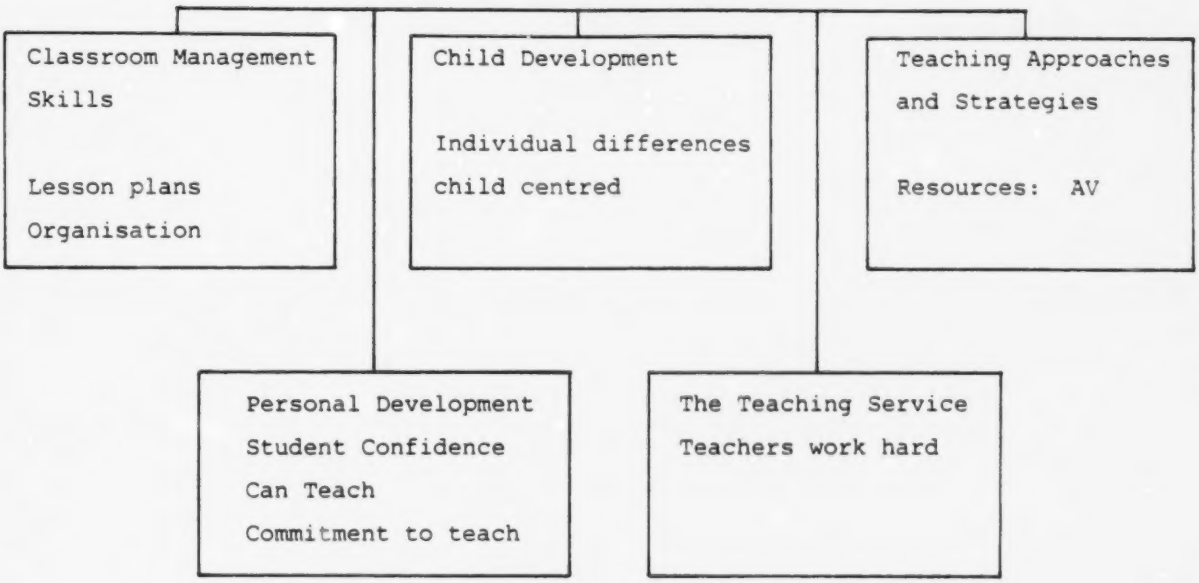
'A lot of mixing with other women is not something I would normally do in the working environment. After working on a building site I find the women more sensitive, more intuitive - it's a big plus for me.' (Christchurch)

A handful of students (1 in Auckland and 4 in Christchurch) referred to negative changes, that is they were less confident because of a poor section experience; or questioned whether they could last the distance because they were not happy with the course, or were asking themselves was teaching really for them:

'I'm beginning to wonder if it is really what I want to do. Well, after being out on section, actually working with the kids by the end of it I was wondering whether it was something I really wanted to do and I still feel self-doubt about my intellectual ability.' (Auckland)

DIAGRAM 9

Students' Professional Development



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The student responses to what they had learnt professionally in terms of becoming a teacher are summarised in Diagram 9.

Although there were differences in emphasis between colleges and differences between students within colleges as to the impact they felt the course had had on their professional development, several clear themes were apparent.

Classroom management skills

The student who responded, 'Lesson plans, lesson plans, lesson plans!' would summarise the view of many Auckland students. However, students from all colleges referred to an emphasis on classroom management skills: the needs for students to have a clear view of what they were trying to achieve in the classroom, for lessons to be well planned and classroom activities well organised.

Child Development

A second strand emphasised understanding children's development and how children learn. Students emphasised the importance of individual differences, of teachers needing to know where 'children are at', to encourage them to think for themselves, and to be aware of children's interests. The need for teachers to build children's self-esteem as well as being honest, fair and caring were also mentioned.

Teaching Approaches and Strategies

Closely linked to classroom management skills and child development are the teaching approaches and strategies to which students are being introduced. Students were not able to go into much detail in the interview but did refer to such issues as positive reinforcement, group approaches to teaching and learning, problem solving methods, practical hands on experiences, motivating children as well as to the importance of classroom atmosphere and the need for teachers to be aware of their own prejudices and not to impose their own views.

In a range of comments mentioned by a few students were:

- value of knowledge gained at university
- dealing with parents
- problems of class size
- knowledge gained from friends and fellow teachers rather than college staff
- ability to listen
- the importance of biculturalism.

It is interesting to note the absence of comment about the curriculum. An exception was the graduate student from Auckland who said that she was now 'more knowledgeable about the curriculum'.

COMPULSORY COURSES

Early on in the interview we established which compulsory courses each student was taking. We then asked them to tell us, for each course, what was the most important thing they had learnt so far. We were hoping to begin to get a picture for ourselves of the development of educational ideas as experienced

by the students. Because of the range of subjects being taken and the small number of students taking particular courses, this did not turn out to be a particularly useful question. However, we did collect data about student attitudes towards lecturing styles and the way courses were organised. We had stressed at the outset that we did not wish students to identify individual lecturers but we found that students in responding to this particular question tended to make value judgements about the course and the lecturer. We think these comments are in fact useful and we categorise them according to the reasons why students think particular courses were or were *not* successful.

WHY SUCCESSFUL

* Enthusiasm and knowledge of lecturer
* Practical implications for the classroom
* Practical assignments
* Curriculum content combined with pedagogical theory
* Course made student more confident
* Students had input into course content
* Lecturer taught as students hope to teach
* Well prepared and presented material
* Useful notes and handouts
* Plenty of work (not just busy work)
* Clear link to university courses.

WHY NOT SUCCESSFUL

* Lack of clarity of course objectives and structure
* Lack of practical application to the classroom
* Course level (usually too 'basic')
* Course pace (usually too slow)
* Repetitive
* The lecturers: boring, unapproachable
* Lack of co-ordination within department
* Time of day (too late in the afternoon)
* Didn't do enough work.
* Length of course: too short, 'bitsy', broken course.

STUDENT PROFILE 5

Jill, aged 35, is taking the shortened two-year course. As the mother of two she feels she has already learnt a lot about child development. This experience has been enhanced by being a supervisor/teacher at a Correspondence School unit where she had sole-charge responsibility for organising daily lessons and also a programme of art, physical education and music for 6 primary school children. She has also had experience as a psychometric tester administering a battery of psychological tests to 8-year-old children as part of a child development research programme. As a parent she has attended Correspondence School camps, helped in the classroom, assisted with reading recovery programmes, and helped at cub camps. She expects her experience as a parent to be acknowledged at the college and feels she has much to contribute about matters of discipline, communication, peer pressure and the importance of acknowledging children's feelings. She also has strong views on the importance of teacher/parent relationships.

She has always wanted to teach and now feels she has important life experiences to bring to the job. Although primary teaching is her first choice of career she feels that being a student is probably as important to her as thinking of her future career as a teacher. She recognises that teaching will provide her with career opportunities and the working conditions will fit in with her domestic commitments.

She found out about the college through teacher friends and publicity material. She was not offered the chance to be interviewed on a marae but she could have taken a support person if she had wished to do so. She didn't feel this was necessary. She doesn't have a very clear idea of what the course will be like but expects a wide range of subjects available to study and opportunities to develop interests in leisure activities. These are particularly important for Jill. The only curriculum areas where she thinks she may need some special help are computer studies and music.

Jill is particularly interested in young children and would like to teach 5- to 7-year-olds. She has a special interest in children with reading difficulties. When asked to draw a picture of herself as a teacher she drew the picture most commonly drawn by students - a teacher reading a story to a group of children.

Jill thinks children learn best in a stimulating environment both in the classroom and at home. She hopes to provide an atmosphere of friendship and support where the children will be comfortable expressing their own views. School failure, in Jill's view, is usually caused by health problems not being

recognised, or by poor communication between parents and teachers.

Jill thinks the most positive thing about New Zealand primary schools is the fact that children have a high degree of freedom to express themselves in language and art. The curriculum is varied and teachers have a wide range of skills and interests. However, she also believes that there are too many teachers who have become stale and set in their ways. There are also insufficient health checks which means that problems of hearing and vision may interfere with children's progress.

She doesn't really see any equity issues which need to be addressed in schools apart from perhaps sex role stereotyping. She is not sure about New Zealand as a bicultural society but does think that it is important for the Maori to have pride in, and knowledge of, their culture and language, and for the European to understand and recognise this need. Both cultures need to co-operate with each other and work together for the good of the country. The greatest challenge facing New Zealand is full employment and political stability.

Six months into the course Jill is really enjoying the life. She was very keen to start, having been out of the workforce for a number of years, and feels she is learning a lot. There are a few little areas of inefficiency and other irritations but on the whole it's good. In some of the courses, like reading for example, she just feels she's having things reinforced that she knew as a parent - like the enjoyment of books. On the other hand she has learnt a lot of little things about setting up a reading programme. Education is a disappointment. She had done so much of it previously at university or picked it up through her children. She's particularly frustrated by this subject and she feels the dissatisfaction she feels is felt generally within the class.

Physical education, on the other hand, is wonderful. The instructor is excellent in terms of lesson planning and making physical education enjoyable for children. Maths she's reasonably good at so that's just been a matter of brushing up on a few things. Music has been a disappointment because the timetable is so broken up. She's found this frustrating as it's a particular interest of hers and she thinks it is a subject that is sometimes neglected in schools. She is anxious to develop her musical skills. She feels that she is floundering with the guitar but when she approached the lecturer because there is a test next week, he just brushed her aside.

She has mixed views about the assessment procedures at the college. It's criterion-based assessment in that students opt for the grade that they

hope to get. Although they are assured that it's not a competitive thing between students she doesn't think this is the case in practice. She regards this as a pity because she thinks students should be learning to co-operate rather than compete. Jill feels there is pressure to attach marks because of the more competitive environment as far as future jobs are concerned. Jill has had two really good teaching section practices but was disappointed that the lecturer, who was obviously very busy, only had time to flit in and out and said she was just fine. She thinks the assessment on section is a bit one way. There's an opportunity for the associate to say what she thinks but no real opportunity for the student to respond. One of her frustrations on section was that she felt the associate didn't really acknowledge that she was a mature parent. There were things she would have liked to try out in the classroom which she was not able to do.

Jill is a graduate but as it's 15 years since she was at university she finds it hard to make comparisons with her experience there and at the college now. In most ways she thinks the college teaching is more relevant to what they are hoping to do in the classroom. College is certainly a friendlier and more sociable place.

Jill is rather critical of the college in terms of their knowledge of individual students. Some of her lecturers still do not know her name. She does not feel that the tutorial system works well either. She feels that although they have occasional discussions, the opportunities for people's problems to be aired are nil.

Jill's commitments outside college make it difficult for her to join in extra activities - not that there appear to be many. She did express an interest earlier in the year in taking part in the drama production but was given the impression that if you weren't strong in music there wasn't much point. The workload is a bit of a problem in that it comes in big bursts. She spends a lot of time ferrying children so has to go straight home in the afternoon. Her mother also needs support. She was widowed recently and moved to be near Jill. Jill calls over to see her most days. Her sister-in-law is mentally ill, so Jill also makes a point of going to see her.

Financially Jill is managing. She is married and has her husband's salary. She gets $32 a week grant, and her mother is always there for financial support. This is the first time in her life Jill has not had at least a part-time job. She's very upset about the fact that she may have to pay fees next year. If she had known that before she enrolled she certainly would not have done so because it's such a big financial commitment and she doesn't think it's fair. She is concerned about the price of textbooks, like

one for $44 for reading - it's just impossible.

She found the orientation a bit of a problem. She thinks it might have been more valuable for older students to have had a get-together after they'd been at college for a while and got to know a few people. She's taken her husband to a few parties but finds that no one else takes partners and he sits there looking bored. She intended to get into all sorts of things but college seems to have taken over her life in terms of spare time. She said the more we as interviewers asked her questions, the more she realised she had not done half the things she had intended to do.

She considers herself to be a pretty easygoing sort of person which is why she is coping as well as she is. There are times when she would like to be recognised more as an older student because she feels there is a lot of time wasted. She really feels that in terms of what she's learnt two years could be crammed into one.

STUDENT PROFILE 6

Sony is a 34-year-old Chinese who is already a university graduate. Her father is a tutor at the polytech and her mother works for a vet. Before coming to college Sony had done some relieving at the IHC school which increased her determination to work with special needs children after she has trained. She has several brothers and sisters and has always enjoyed the company of younger children. She feels she knows what some of their needs are.

Sony's main reason for wanting to teach is that she loves learning so being a student is probably as important to her as thinking about her future career as a teacher. However, she also wants a chnace to influence New Zealand's future by being a teacher. She regards primary teaching as a stepping stone to work in other areas of education.

Sony had read a number of books on education before coming to college, largely associated with an education paper she had taken at university. These included the Picot Report; Paulo Friere's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; and Marilyn Ferguson's *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. She'd also watched a video on Montessori pre-school as well as one on education in Japan.

Sony's mother was probably her main influence in deciding to teach but she did get information about the college from teacher friends and the university careers adviser. When Sony was interviewed for college she could have taken a support person with her but did not feel it was necessary. She thought the interviewing panel were interested in candidates who had good communication skills, had a commitment to education and were aware of community and societal needs, including the need for cultural sensitivity.

Before Sony arrived at college she had formed the impression that she would be kept busy although she did not expect the course to be demanding academically. She hopes this is not the case because she is looking forward to the intellectual stimulation. She is also particularly looking forward to teaching practice sections and hopes to take part in a major musical production. Like most students, Sony thinks it will be hard to have less money than her friends while she is at college.

Sony thinks she is particularly suited to teaching because she is good humoured and not temperamental. She thinks she has excellent communication skills, including the ability to listen. She believes she is sensitive to children's needs and is also aware of current social and community issues. All these she regards as the qualities of a 'good teacher'. Sony thinks her main problem in the classroom may be developing the ability to keep her

distance a little and not get too attached to the children.

Sony thinks children learn best when they have enough opportunity to express themselves, are highly motivated and are comfortable in a school environment which is compatible with that of the home. She thinks children fail because a cultural or social bias in the curriculum works against them, because they lack motivation or because they have problems in communicating their ideas. As a teacher she thinks the most important things she can do for the children in her class are to encourage self-confidence and a realistic appreciation of their own abilities and talents; provide evidence of the relevance of school to the 'real world' and ensure that they continue to enjoy learning in the way most children do when they start school.

Sony loves reading and is looking forward to teaching oral language and reading as well as her special interest of music. There isn't much she is *not* looking forward to teaching, although she realises she has no knowledge of computer studies. She is particularly interested in junior school pupils and would like to have responsibility for slow learners. In keeping with her love of reading, Sony drew herself in a circle of 6-year-old children taking turns to read and listen to each other.

Sony thinks that the main strength of New Zealand primary schools is that children are not forced to learn. She also likes the breadth of the curriculum. She is pleased with the facilities that are available for special needs children although they are not as accessible as they should be. The main weaknesses in the school system are large classes and lack of opportunity for children and teachers to express their own cultural background. Nor is there enough opportunity for children in primary schools to learn other languages.

Sony believes that there are sexist issues in primary schools particularly the fact that there are not enough male teachers for young children, and too few women in senior positions. Sony also thinks there are racist issues in primary schools, the main one being that children of other cultures are still expected to take on western Pakeha values and attitudes in order to succeed in the system. She realises that this is a difficult issue because no education system can help having a cultural bias - all teachers can hope to do is to minimise the bias. Sony regards New Zealand as a multicultural society. However, she recognises that most ethnic minorities in New Zealand, including the Chinese, have a strong cultural base elsewhere. The Maori, on the other hand, have nowhere else to look, which means that New Zealand society must provide opportunities, especially educational, to strengthen Maori culture in this country.

Sony thinks that socio-economic class is likely to become more of an issue in schools under Picot, with schools in the wealthiest communities having better resources available to them. When Sony speaks of the consequences for her as a classroom teacher of the recent administrative changes in education, she said she is concerned that equal employment opportunities for teachers might be jeopardised. She is also concerned that there might be fewer support services, such as psychologists for special needs children. She hopes, however, that closer links with the community will ensure that the skills taught in schools are more related to community needs.

Six months into the course Sony is really enjoying herself and thinks the people at college are great. She finds college very different from university but after several years as a full-time university student she was due for a change. She doesn't feel as surrounded by young people straight from school as she had expected. She's really excited by the variety of people around. There's plenty to do and it's up to individual students to make the most of the place. 'There are lots of different ideas flying about.' Like most students, Sony found that there was a good deal of confusion at the beginning of the year and she had some problems sorting out what she was meant to be doing. She's glad there were so many choices although it wasn't at all clear initially on what basis choices should be made.

Because Sony is doing the two-year graduate course she thinks it's important to get stuck into the basic subjects early on. She has found the course on teaching language in the classroom particularly useful, with plenty of practical ideas. Maths, on the other hand, is a rather badly structured course. She can't figure out the pattern of the course. Lecturers just seem to 'pluck things out' rather than work systematically through from junior school to senior school maths. The relevance of the reading course wasn't immediately clear but proved to be useful during the first teaching practice section. Other subjects she'd covered in college such as social studies, Sony found she could not use when she went into schools because of the rigidity of the classroom timetable. Science is probably the subject where the course outline is most clear cut and students knew exactly what they would be doing and where they would get to by the end of the course.

Sony has some criticism to make of the methods used to assess students. She is more interested in critical comment through a course rather than waiting for a mark at the end which isn't much use. It's not at all clear in some courses how students are being assessed. Sony thinks the assessment on teaching practice with feedback from visiting lecturers was pretty good, considering the number of students who had to be visited.

Sony has thought a good deal about the relationship of the college to the university but she doesn't go around 'constantly comparing the two'. She had been warned that she would be 'talked down to' by college lecturers but she is not finding that to be the case. She thinks the two institutions are different and serve a different function. She thinks that whether or not students find the college course intellectually demanding depends a good deal on themselves. Her view is that if you are the sort of person who makes their own intellectual demands you can find them anywhere. She thinks the teaching methods are different at the two institutions and on the whole there are rather better teachers at college than at the university. She doesn't know whether college people are actually more friendly than those at university but because they are together more and have a common sense of purpose they get to know each other better and are more supportive.

Sony doesn't feel she's had much opportunity to use her foreign language skills or to make use of her own cultural background but wonders if this is a reflection of the fact that coming from a Chinese background she has spent her time adapting to the New Zealand society and it's up to her to use her own culture however she wants to. All her life she has found that every time she walks out of her door at home she enters New Zealand society and every time she walks back through the door she re-enters a Chinese culture and language. One of the challenges for herself is to find ways by which she can bring her own culture to what she is doing. Being the kind of 'hybrid' person she is she would like to know more about what she is doing as a Chinese. But she considers that is her responsibility, not the college's. Sony feels her ignorance of Maoritanga has been exposed since she came to college. To be able to develop a real understanding of Maori culture Sony feels it is really important that she has an understanding of where she comes from herself and that is something that she is constantly exploring. Coming from a Chinese culture but being brought up in New Zelaand it has taken her a long time to resolve the issue of her relationship to Maoritanga but she thinks she's now ready to begin exploring again.

EQUITY ISSUES[21]

Equity issues are a matter of major public concern in New Zealand at the moment. Much of the discussion centering around the Treaty of Waitangi, the Royal Commission on Social Policy, changes in the health care system and other topics is driven by the question, is New Zealand society fair?

Recent developments under Tomorrow's Schools have brought equity issues to the fore in schools. This is not to say that schools were previously unaware of them, but in the charters by which schools will operate by 1990 there are several sections which deal with equity issues and oblige schools to 'ensure that the curriculum is non-sexist and non-racist and that any disadvantages experienced at the school by students, parents, or staff members because of gender, or religious, ethnic, cultural, social or family background is acknowledged and addressed' and 'to fulfil the intent of the Treaty of Waitangi by valuing New Zealand's dual cultural heritage'. Equity issues are now out into the open. They are now explicitly stated in school charters as issues which must be recognised and dealt with by schools and teachers.

It is clear that teachers have a pivotal role to play in any concerted public policy seeking greater equity, and teacher trainees should be prepared for this aspect of their professional role.

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21. Material included in this section of the report formed the basis of a paper, 'Some Student Views on Equity Issues', presented at the 1989 NZARE Conference.

Selected equity issues were raised in both the questionnaire and the interviews.

1. In the questionnaire students were asked several questions about the Treaty of Waitangi and biculturalism. In a series of questions on broad social and educational issues they were also asked whether they thought racism, sexism and socio-economic status were issues in New Zealand primary schools.

2. In the interviews students were asked:

   i) whether sexism, racism, socio-economic status and biculturalism had been raised as 'issues' during the course
   ii) whether they thought these are issues they need to be aware of
   iii) whether they had changed their views since starting college
   iv) if they themselves had personally experienced any discriminatory practices
   v) whether in the context of the college these are important issues that need to be addressed.

Our intention was to find out what students thought about these various equity issues *before* they began their training and then to monitor their experience of equity issues, and the ways by which their views might change, as they progressed through college and ultimately into their first year in the classroom.

STUDENT VIEWS ON EQUITY ISSUES IN NEW ZEALAND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Of the three issues raised, students were more concerned about racism and socio-economic status as issues than they were of sexism. Wellington had consistently the greatest proportion of students and Auckland had consistently the smallest proportion of students who thought that any of these issues are problems in primary schools. Mature students were significantly more likely than school leavers to believe that each of the equity issues we raised were issues in New Zealand primary schools. (See also Table 16)

Table 16

Percentages of students who think sexism, racism and SES are issues in New Zealand primary schools

Issue	Auckland %	Wellington %	Christchurch %	All students %
Sexism	30	48	39	38
Racism	56	66	57	59
SES	48	61	58	54

SEXISM

Sexism was considered an issue by fewer than 40% of all students. A few optimistic students among the intakes saw changes for the better occurring in society and in the classroom, but the majority of those who thought sexism was an issue in primary schools could see examples of sexist attitudes and practices both in the classroom and in the structure of the education system itself.

Examples given by students of sexist practices in the classroom were:

- boys receiving greater teacher attention
- girls being expected to be more positive and polite
- boys and girls not being given the same opportunites to participate in various curriculum areas, in particular maths, science, craftwork and home economics.

These attitudes were thought by some merely to reflect views in the wider society implying a certain inevitability in some teachers and children having sexist views. Other students believed that stereotypical roles are being encouraged and reinforced in the classroom by the resources and materials available. They gave examples of reading books portraying 'Mum in the kitchen while Dad is out at work' or 'boys having all the adventures while the girls stayed at home'.

The organisation and hierarchy of the education system as a whole, and of schools, also serves to reinforce sexist attitudes in the view of many students. The fact was noted that most senior positions in primary teaching are filled by males although most teachers are women. Other students felt that the low pay and status of teaching, particularly primary teaching, was a consequence of it being considered a woman's job. Some mentioned that whereas primary teaching was dominated by women, there were far more men in secondary teaching, which was seen to have more status and better pay, and few women teaching in the tertiary sector, which had even more status and even better pay.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Compared with sexism, considerably more students thought that socio-economic class is an issue in New Zealand primary schools. Many saw class distinctions between different schools within their own city. A 'vicious circle' was seen to exist, with low-income areas tending not to attract teachers and more affluent parents sending their children out of the area to 'better' schools, adding to low educational achievement in the schools in communities where there are mostly low SES families.

These same schools were thought to be disadvantaged in the physical resources that they can offer their pupils. Many students felt that because the parents and the community of low SES schools are poor, the schools are not able to raise money for facilities, leading to restricted and inequitable educational opportunities for their pupils. A few mentioned that they expected this situation to become worse with the implementation of Tomorrow's Schools.

Many students felt that parents from low-income families are less able to give their children the support needed for educational success. Students thought that these parents did not have the same aspirations or interest in education as parents from higher SES groups. Teacher attitudes were also thought to be influenced by socio-economic considerations. Most teachers were thought to be middle class and possibly unaware of the problems faced by those who are less well off; teachers seemed to expect less of lower-class pupils.

Children's awareness of socio-economic differences among themselves was thought to affect their behaviour and attitudes towards each other. 'Poor' children may be looked down on by children from more affluent families.

Many of the trainees had a view that the home environment of those in lower SES groups was deprived; the children from such homes are more likely to

be aggressive and to have health problems. These children were also likely, in the view of students, to be deprived of 'educationally rich' experiences such as books and travel with the result that they entered school with a 'deficit'. Such children were also thought to be more difficult to motivate, having a poor attitude to school and limited educational aspirations.

RACISM

Of the three equity issues we raised, racism concerned students the most. Children's racist attitudes caused the most comment. Teachers, to a lesser extent, were also thought to hold racist attitudes. A few thought the school system as a whole was inherently racist.

Children's racist attitudes in the classroom were thought to come from their home environment which in turn reflected racism in the wider society. Whereas some students felt teachers had an opportunity and responsibility to 'gently guide pupils away from racism', others felt that teachers themselves held racist attitudes. Some felt that teachers had lower expectations of Maori and Polynesian pupils and didn't give these pupils the encouragement they needed to succeed. Cultural insensitivity because of the 'white, middle class environment' of teaching was inevitable in some eyes.

This was also felt to be true of the education system which was seen as being based on an inappropriate European model of education where the values and experiences of the dominant culture are regarded as the only values of worth. This promotion of one culture to the exclusion of others was thought to be evident in the resources and materials available in schools.

THE TREATY OF WAITANGI

The students were asked to give their views on the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi for both the college course and their practice as a classroom teacher.

In both questions a majority of students felt that the Treaty was an important contemporary issue which should be reflected in the college course by an emphasis on the study of Maori language and culture. Many of the students also felt that they themselves had insufficient knowledge of Treaty issues and Taha Maori to teach it confidently in the classroom, and hoped that the course would go some way towards rectifying this lack.

A substantial minority, just over a third of all students, stated that they either didn't know what effect the Treaty would have either on the course

or in the classroom, or felt that it would or should have little or no effect. Some of these students expressed negative attitudes towards the Treaty.

NEW ZEALAND AS A BICULTURAL SOCIETY

Almost half of the students (44%) believed that New Zealand should be a bicultural society. Some said that New Zealand is already on the way to becoming bicultural, but also added that there was a long way to go before biculturalism is achieved. Many felt that greater promotion of Maori language and culture was necessary before New Zealand could consider itself bicultural.

Almost one-quarter (22%) of the answers stressed the multicultural, as distinct from bicultural, nature of New Zealand society, with a few preferring to think of us all as New Zealanders.

A further 13% of students had negative feelings towards biculturalism, feeling that the topic caused friction and even led to inverted racism.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE COLLEGES

Once again there were differences between intake groups in student attitudes towards the Treaty and biculturalism. Auckland students were less likely than the intakes at the other two colleges to give any acknowledgement to the importance of Maori language and culture in their own right. Wellington students were the most likely of the three intakes to make positive comments about the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi for the college course and for their own practice in the classroom, whereas Auckland and Christchurch students were more likely to deny that the Treaty has any relevance in either case.

This difference between the intakes in the colleges in their attitude to biculturalism and the Treaty of Waitangi is supported by our analysis of answers to other questions which did not ask directly about equity issues but which to some extent reflect concerns about equity.

For example, students were asked what factors had influenced their decision to teach. Compared to other factors, relatively few students gave their concern for Maori and Pacific Island children as an influence. However, 35% of Wellington students ticked this factor compared with 26% of Auckland students and 18% of Christchurch students.

Although Wellington has a smaller proportion of Maori and Pacific Island students (23%) than Auckland (26%), a greater proportion of the intake was

looking forward to 'belonging to the Maori/Polynesian club' (32% in Wellington cf 20% in Auckland. (In Christchurch the figures are Maori/Pacific Island intake of 5% with 8% of students wanting to belong to the Maori/Polynesian club.)

THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE : THE STUDENT INTERVIEWS

As a continuation of the first phase of the study, a sample of 107 students across the three colleges were interviewed. It is difficult to achieve comparability of student experience both between and within colleges. Individual colleges have a good deal of autonomy over their courses and although they operate under national guidelines they structure their training courses differently. A student at Auckland College of Education will have a different training experience from one at Wellington or Christchurch. In addition each student's experience is influenced by their subject choice within a college course. Even courses which are compulsory may be taken at different times of the year. Some students we interviewed, for example, had completed a Maori studies course which other students were just starting. Graduate students also have a different experience from other first-year students. We tried to standardise the interview process across colleges by interviewing students at a comparable stage of their course, after they had been at college for six months and after they had all had one teaching practice section.

There were difficulties with this part of the interview. Firstly the 'equity' questions came towards the end of a long interview. We sensed the reaction in some students of, 'Oh, not again!' Secondly, students interpreted the questions in different ways and certainly defined the terms differently. What, for example, is racism? Several students linked racism with biculturalism, as did the one who said:

> 'I put biculturalism with racism'.

and another:

> 'Doesn't that come under racism, basically?'

OVERALL DIFFERENCES BY COLLEGE

Students were first asked whether or not the various topics we had labelled 'equity issues' had been raised at the colleges. There were differences between colleges in the students' perceptions as to whether or not this was the case. Table 17 is an attempt to summarise these differences between colleges. The numbers in each case need to be treated with caution. Students who said issues had been raised ranged in their comments from statements such as:

'It's been touched on, but nothing really.'

to

'Comes up frequently all the time.'

Table 17

Equity issues raised by students

Issue	Auckland (N = 41) Raised	Not raised	Wellington (N = 34) Raised	Not raised	Christchurch (N = 32) Raised	Not raised
Sexism	19	21	26	8	20	12
Racism	22	18	20	14	14	18
SES	16	24	18	16	16	16
Bicult-uralism	26	14	31	3	15	17
Total	83	77	95	41	65	63

NOTE: One student did not respond to this question.

Although the analysis is rather crude, certain trends were apparent:

1. Wellington students were considerably more likely than students at Auckland or Christchurch to believe that the issues we selected to talk about had been raised during their first six months at the college. The Wellington students were more than twice as likely to say that the issues overall had been raised; Auckland and Christchurch students divided approximately half and half.

2. The issue that most clearly divided the colleges, in terms of student experience, was biculturalism. All but three of the Wellington students thought biculturalism had been raised at the college. In Auckland about twice as many students thought biculturalism had been raised as an issue as those who did not. In Christchurch the students divided fairly evenly.

3. Sexism was the only issue where the students in Christchurch who thought an issue had been raised outnumbered those who did not. Once again most students in Wellington thought sexism had been raised as an issue, and Auckland students divided almost equally.

4. With regard to racism and SES, the differences between colleges is less marked.

THE ISSUES

Sexism

The likelihood of students believing sexism had been raised as an issue at the college differed between colleges. But the range of explanatory comments made by students was similar.

i) General Comments

The overall impression from students was that sexism and gender equity were issues that 'came up from time to time in class discussion' but were not issues that have been focused on in any depth at any of the colleges. As the students put it:

> 'In a token way - all of them. It depends very much on the personality of the lecturers. Some bring it up and brush over it. Others I don't think really care except cosmetically - a lot of them say "he", "she", "it" instead of "he". But I think it's just like New Zealand society - people just don't want to address the issue.' (Wellington)
>
> 'It's been touched on but nothing really. You get the normal sexually harassed, sexually abused type talk given to you. That doesn't sink in either.' (Christchurch)
>
> 'Briefly discussed in education classes. We didn't do any work on it - just a discussion.' (Auckland)

ii) Specific courses and topics

Where students singled out specific courses which had raised sexism as an issue, education, professional studies and social studies courses were the ones most likely to be referred to. Students also mentioned health, science and maths courses and literature classes. Topics likely to be raised were the use of sexist language; sexist books and resources; the need to encourage girls in maths and science by, for example, 'girl friendly' science; stereotyped play; classroom management; role models for girls; equity in physical education and sport, and job inequalities.

The optional course at Wellington, Women and Girls in Education, was referred to by three or four students. This was the only first-year course referred to which addressed any equity issue as its main theme. Earlier in the interview students had been questioned about their optional courses. Women and Girls in Education was one of very few optional courses at any of the colleges which the students who had taken it said should be compulsory.

We interviewed Christchurch students shortly after the college had run a programme for 'non-sexist week'. This may explain why students were likely to say that of all the equity issues, sexism was the one most likely to have been raised.

> 'We had a non-sexist week a month ago. That was interesting because a lot of the students thought that was absolute rubbish and they couldn't see the need for it. I was surprised at how many didn't even think that sexism existed - not just males, females too.'

Non-sexist messages were beamed through the use of posters at Christchurch and Wellington.

iii) Student indifference and antagonism

The quotation above raises the issue of student attitudes towards sexism as an issue. Indifference or antagonism, similar to that apparent in student comments in the questionnaires, was also present in a significant minority of students' comments from all the colleges, for example,

> 'The issue hasn't been raised - thank goodness!' (Auckland)

> 'Because there are a lot of women around, there are a lot of feminists. I believe it doesn't matter and I'm sticking to my views.' (Auckland)

'Stupid "he"/"she" things in stories. Children's literature scrutinised.' (Auckland)

'As a Christian I believe men are dominant but not to the point of being able to throw us around. It's not a problem to me.' (Wellington)

iv) Other Influences

Sexism can be raised in contexts other than the lecture room and by people other than lecturers. Students referred particularly to the influence of other students - feminist students - 'who keep us all aware'.

Students also referred to discussions in the cafeteria and at hostels. Students taking university courses said equity issues, including sexism were raised there. This was particularly the case in Christchurch where students who were taking education courses said that equity issues were covered more fully at the university than at the college. Graduates were also likely to say that the issues were brought up in college discussions by students because of their previous university experience in education, psychology or sociology.

Racism

Six months into the course, more students than not (particularly in Wellington) said racism had been raised as an issue. But it was difficult from the student comments, to develop a very clear picture of what they believed was happening. A few referred to the difficulty of discussing the issue which they thought was avoided.

'That's a very sensitive issue which they discuss but very carefully. It's like tiptoeing through a minefield. Because we've got all ethnic groups here it's very hard to actually have a good discussion about it because everyone gets heated... they tend to avoid it.' (Auckland)

About half a dozen students commented on what they believed to be racist attitudes on the part of other students (demonstrated in some instances by their objection to having to take bicultural courses), and others to a feeling that it was difficult to express their own views for fear of being labelled racist.

Particular courses were mentioned, but by relatively few students. The maths department in Auckland, for example, was described by one student as being

'... very aware of how we use examples which may be totally irrelevant

for Maori and Pacific Island cultures.'

Social studies and Maori studies courses in Wellington were also mentioned as courses where the issue of racism had been raised, as were social studies, reading, education and the Maori block course in Christchurch. Even when students did refer to courses, they differed in their views. The multicultural studies course in Auckland, for example, was referred to as a course where racism was raised as an issue, although several students regard the course in itself as racist.

The overall impression is that racism, as with sexism, had been 'touched on lightly' in a range of courses, particularly education, social studies and language courses, but, unlike sexism, most students thought it was an issue that many people are concerned about but shy away from.

Socio-Economic Status

As with the other equity issues, socio-economic status could be raised either in the lecture room or observed and discussed in relation to teaching practice. In Wellington, one student said they had been shown schools in different SES areas in Block O (the Orientation programme), which was a surprise to her because previously she had thought ' all wealthy people automatically went to private schools'. All the other student comments in Wellington referred to the lecture room - usually to discussions of child development in professional studies. One student added that although 'poor' children were not singled out, children of solo parents were:

> 'Assumption that children of single parents are most likely to be poor, deprived, disadvantaged. We were asked to subtly find out about children's background - nuclear families are top of the hierarchy.'

In Christchurch, by comparison, although a few students referred to education readings and discussions in education lectures, most of the comments were to practical experience in the schools.

> 'Yes, that was covered quite well. In practice, the first time we went to a school, we went to a low socio-economic school, and we also went to Elmwood School which is a higher socio-economic school and that difference was marked and we could see that.'

There was a suggestion in some of the student comments, particularly from Christchurch, that it was not an issue among the students because, 'we're all

the same sort of middle-class people':

> 'Just looking around you can see the different "classes", especially when we discussed what schools people went to. A lot of them went to private schools. It's not really an issue here because nobody seems to worry about it, but it's talked about in various subjects.'

Another Christchurch student said that she felt

> 'Too much emphasis is put on schools and the area they're in. A lot of people when they come back from section, the first question was, "Was it a socio-economic low area or higher area?" That's all they're interested in. I think if you become a teacher, teachers shouldn't really worry where they teach. The students tend to think, " Well, it's not on to teach in a working class area..." They just think they're going to cruise along.'

There were relatively few comments from Auckland students - a few references to the backgrounds of children affecting performance; to the issue being raised in social studies, education, health and multicultural studies; and to the view that it will become more of an issue under Tomorrow's Schools.

Biculturalism

Of the four issues discussed, biculturalism is the one which students from Auckland and Wellington are most likely to think has been raised. This is particularly so in Wellington where virtually all students said this was the case:

> 'Biculturalism comes up frequently - going on about it all the time.'
>
> 'Definitely in Maori studies - racism and biculturalism are big issues at the college.'

The compulsory Maori studies course in Wellington and social studies, where the Treaty of Waitangi had been discussed, were the courses most frequently mentioned by students. The issue had also been raised in other classes but students said the focus was on 'multiculturalism rather than biculturalism'.

In Auckland most of those students who thought the issue had been raised referred to the multicultural studies course:

> 'Biculturalism in the multicultural area handled really well but I don't experience biculturalism here.'

'They're going to make multicultural studies into bicultural studies next year because that's what it is. We don't really learn anything much about anything else. The issues are definitely raised in multicultural studies and I think it's really important. We're in a fairly Pakeha dominated society right now and I think you've got to address some of these issues.'

Few Christchurch students, in contrast to the other two colleges, believed biculturalism had been raised as an issue. Those who did referred to the Maori block course and 'a little bit' in social studies.

'In block course we've started to do a bit on biculturalism but it didn't deal with questions like - Are you racist? What does it mean? How do you feel about Maori issues? Nothing is dealt with except on a superficial level.'

Two students who said biculturalism had *not* been raised commented:

'Biculturalism: I don't feel we've had much on that at all. We've looked at the European view on everything so far, not bicultural.'

'Unless this has all passed me by, I don't think I've heard that mentioned either. Apart from again in education you have to be culturally aware with children - just a brief mention. Could have gone into more depth before we went out on section.'

DO TEACHERS NEED TO BE AWARE OF THESE ISSUES?

Virtually all the students interviewed believe that the equity issues raised by us are issues students need to be aware of to become teachers. Most who added a comment recognised that, as these were issues 'in society at large', teachers needed to be aware of them to be effective teachers. Many students added an emphatic 'definitely'. On the other hand there were a sizeable number who added a cautionary note:

'I think you've got to be aware of them and know how to cope with them if they arise. I don't think they need to be a key focus all the time because I think that's where the problems arise when you do.' (Christchurch)

'Yes. You've got to be aware of them but you've got to take it in your stride - you can't over-emphasise them. They're there and you've got to acknowledge them but there's no use blowing them up any further than what they already are.' (Auckland)

'Yes, but I think people are aware of them without having them drummed into you all the time.' (Wellington)

Such students reflected a view that there was no need 'to go overboard'. Although some students acknowledged that they'd 'never thought about the issues' before coming to college, others indicated that they were getting a bit tired of the same issues being raised so often.

STUDENTS WHO HAVE CHANGED VIEWS SINCE ARRIVAL

When we asked the students if they had changed their views on any of these issues since they had been at college, their responses were remarkably uniform over the three colleges. In each case 11 or 12 students said they had changed their views and the remaining 20-25 said they had not.

If students had changed their views they were likely to think they had become 'more aware' or 'more open and broadminded'. If they referred to a particular issue it was most likely to be biculturalism and/or multiculturalism.

> 'Multicultural aspects possibly. I've changed my views a bit - not realising what it was like in schools. I felt a bit intimidated going into schools but now, having worked with wide multicultural settings, working with Maori and Polynesian in the class it's changed my views a bit.' (Auckland)

> 'Yes - biculturalism. Now have a broader understanding and can see it in context. More concerned with multiculturalism before I came here, mainly because I lived in a Samoan area.' (Auckland)

> 'I think I've become a lot more aware of the bicultural side. Because all my schooling was done in Dunedin and there were very few other races. There were no Maori and very few Polynesians. I've had a bias in me already without even wanting to so it's helped me to address this situation and I've done a bit of Maori studies. I think it's a good way to accept other people.' (Christchurch)

> 'I hope I've become a bit more sensitive to how other people react and that it might not be how I react. I've got a friend in the Maori studies group and I've been out to the marae with her.' (Christchurch)

> 'Biculturalism. Before I didn't consider it a hell of a lot but now I realise how important it is especially for the classroom enviroment.' (Wellington)

> 'Awareness has increased. Unsure of what the terms meant when filling out questionnaire. Learnt most about these issues in my bilingual class.' (Wellington)

Several students also referred to an increased understanding of the

significance of sexism but no students referred to changed attitudes towards racism or socio-economic status.

Although nearly all the students who said they'd changed their views indicated that they had become better informed about particular equity issues, several said their attitudes had become more negative or entrenched - usually in relation to biculturalism.

> 'Yes, I've become more racist. I say that jokingly but I feel very threatened by the Maoris here on campus and the clout they have. This is the erroneously named multicultural studies which is Maori studies I felt hostile to the constant Maori emphasis during orientation even being greeted by Kia Ora or Tena Koutou.' (Auckland)

> 'I was fed up with it so didn't go to the marae welcome. If they were trying to promote more understanding with Pakehas then they failed with me. I felt that being Pakeha was denigrated and being Maori was good - insidious message. The Pakehas on campus talk about this quite a lot and if they're trying to do what I think they're trying to do then it's not working.' (Auckland)

INEQUITABLE EXPERIENCES

We asked the students whether or not they had had any experiences which they considered to be inequitable since they arrived at college. We also asked them, regardless of whether or not they personally had had inequitable experiences, whether they considered there were equity issues the college needed to address. The student responses to these two questions are summarised in Table 18.

As far as their personal experience went, the students' responses were remarkably uniform across the three colleges. Overall students were about twice as likely to say that they had *not* had any inequitable experiences as that they had. Rather more students thought there were equity issues the colleges needed to address. However, in Auckland and Christchurch students who did *not* think there were equity issues the college needed to address outnumbered those who did. In Wellington, although the number of students who thought there were equity issues to be addressed outnumbered those who did not, the difference was not great.

Table 18

Students' views on equity issues at college

	Auckland		Wellington		Christchurch		All	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Part A								
Personal inequitable experience/s	14	27	11	23	10	22	35	72
Part B								
College equity issues need to be addressed	16	25	18	16	12	20	46	61

WHAT ARE THE EQUITY ISSUES?

Most students who thought there were equity issues to be addressed added an explanatory comment. The issues raised tended to be similar regardless of whether it was because students believed they had personally had inequitable experiences or because they believed there were equity issues the college needed to address.

Issues largely outside the control of college staff

* Inequitable bursaries in favour of Maori students (largest single category of comments, particularly noted by Auckland students).
* Ratio of male to female students.
* High proportion of male lecturers (Christchurch only).
* Insufficient intake of Maori students.
* Students accepted only because they were Maori.

Within college issues

i) Gender equity

* Male chauvinist lecturers - sexist lecturers.
* Female/male student ratios:
  - Some saw this as giving the males a hard time.
  - Others believed the males were favoured.

* Subject bias in favour of one gender or the other.

ii) Ethnicity 'issues'

* Need for more bicultural focus (mainly Christchurch).
* Maori/Polynesian students favoured.
* Racist students who don't understand the issues.
* Biculturalism/multiculturalism debate
  - Cultural background of students other than Maori should be recognised, eg Dutch, Yugoslav, Scottish.
* Too much stress on Maori culture.
  - Dangers of inverse racism.
  - Anti-white middle class.
  - Insensitivity to Pakeha culture.
  - 'Born again White Maoris'.
  - Resentment of Pakeha students at being made to feel 'second-class citizens'; carry the burden of 'guilt' for Maori ills.
* Maori and Polynesian students keep to themselves.

iii) Other Issues

* Courses designed for school leavers with insufficient awareness of the needs of mature students.
* Parents/mature students favoured.
* Lesbianism not recognised.

These student views on equity issues are based on student responses to questions in one part of a longer interview. Equity issues were raised spontaneously by students elsewhere in the interview, for example, in their comments about college courses, particularly Maori studies and multicultural courses; in their attitude towards the orientation programme; and in their overall reaction to their experience at college. We have yet to complete a detailed analysis of this material but students were clearly divided in their views, particularly on the place of Maoritanga in the college programme and the way it was handled.

STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF MAORITANGA

When questioned about their experiences of Maoritanga since arriving at the college nearly all students said they had had experience of things Maori during the first six months of the college course. (The exception were three Auckland students who were starting the multicultural course in the second half of the year.)

AUCKLAND STUDENTS

About half of the students referred to the multicultural course. As one student put it:

> 'None until multicultural studies and then we got full blown hit on the head with it.'

Equally common was the feeling that the course content did not match the label. About half of the students who had taken the course said they had expected to learn about multiculturalism and were disappointed that the course was in fact biculturalism and, in their view, 'biased towards the Maori'. One Pakeha student commented that:

> 'Multicultural issues were covered well and the Treaty. We learnt about biculturalism in context.'

A more common view was that students were uncomfortable with the Maori emphasis. There was a perception that there was an anti-Pakeha feeling among some staff:

> 'People complain a lot about the multicultural course. The lecturers are anti-Pakeha but everyone says not to say anything - not to make waves. If you do say anything the lecturers will write a report to say you have poor racial attitudes and you'll be cancelled out as not suitable to be in a classroom. We have to write an essay on the Treaty of Waitangi and we're told by other students to put in anti-Pakeha things or you won't pass.'

> 'We discuss the multicultural course around the table and in the cafe. You have to be careful what you say. If you were a Maori interviewer I'd be reluctant to talk to you in this way in case I offended you. I felt differently before I came to college. Racism wasn't an issue. I worked among Islanders and I respected their different culture but I resent the way Maori is pushed here. I was told before I came here that they were trying to make the teachers pro-Maori and anti-Pakeha so that they will influence the kids and thereby change society.'

About half of the students interviewed also spoke of their experience of protocol on the marae. One student doing a Maori culture option said this:

> 'The atmosphere at the Whare Kai is peaceful, it's just good. I find Maori people to be lovely caring people and it brings our class together. I go down to the Whare Kai a lot and spend most of my time learning or being around Maori culture. You don't see students not doing Maori culture options down there. I was interviewed on the marae - I just love the friendly atmosphere at the Whare Kai.'

Two or three students referred to experiences of things Maori being 'touched on' in other subject areas - maths, music and education.

Nearly all students felt they had had exposure to Maori language. As one said:

> 'We've all been on the marae a few times and there's been a lot of Maori spoken.

As far as learning the Maori language went, students typically referred to greetings, counting, telling the time, the parts of the body and a few songs. Students differed in their views as to how much Maori language they had been exposed to but most referred to a 'little here and there'. One student commented:

> 'More than I was expecting. I was expecting basic numbers. With the songs we've sung we've analysed all the words. Basic vocab, pens, pencils, cloth, parts of the body. Gone over lots of myths and legends.'

On the other hand, there was also a student with a linguistic background who had assumed that she would be able to learn to speak Maori while at college and was disappointed that there was not a course available.

WELLINGTON STUDENTS

About half of the students interviewed went to Kapa Haka and most were enthusiastic about the experience. It was not only the Pakeha students who felt they had much to learn. One Maori student commented:

> 'When I was a girl my mother used to tell me a lot of things but she didn't explain. There were things I knew I shouldn't do when it comes to Maori superstition, if you like to call it that. Being at Kapa Haka explained it. If someone asks me now why they shouldn't do certain things I can give them an answer. Before I just said I don't know. It's just how I've been brought up. Makes a lot of sense. Things seem to fall into place. Learning about other tribes they have different beliefs. Now I know that my way is not the only way. I've visited other marae - before it was only Maniapoto. I didn't realise there was a

difference.'

Half of the students also referred to the Maori welcome during the orientation programme, most of whom felt it made them feel very welcome onto Ako Pai.

Critical comments from the students tended to focus on Maori Studies 100 which many considered to be badly organised. One graduate student described her experience:

> 'One class in Maori studies which was unfortunately badly organised. We were assessed on our current state of knowledge by a show of hands for meanings of words - divided on this basis into four groups and top group were appointed tutors to the others. We were then asked to literally 'copy' a list of words from a folder prepared by a previous student. This was our work for week one. There was no teaching of the words we were copying.'

On the other hand a second student commented:

> 'Just Maori Studies 100. I've learnt how much I have to learn. How important it is. I've developed an understanding of what the term "New Zealand as a bicultural society" really means. As far as Maoritanga is concerned, if I want to be a good techer I have to develop that part of my education. Not so much so that I can use it in the classroom but so that I can understand my students and hopefully get some students to understand it themselves. In college Maori students have been given a lot of mana, and they say Kia Ora to you which makes me realise that it's not just that you learn these things in class but that it's all around you.'

CHRISTCHURCH STUDENTS

For most students by far the most important and helpful experience had been a Maori block course. Those students who took the course said there was some resistance among the students to taking the course and some did not attend. However, those who went were invariably enthusiastic - 'all of us who went thought it really wonderful.' Much of the time appeared to have been spent learning Maori songs to entertain visitors, learning greetings the Maori alphabet, pronunciation and how to make poi. The highlight was putting on a performance for a group of school children. As one student described it:

> 'We put on a performance at one of the local schools. They came in and stayed for the weekend and we entertained them and made right royal jackasses of ourselves but it was all fun.'

Part of the block experience was the powhiri for the school children and the students' reaction to this experience was in such contrast to their reaction to the powhiri at the beginning of the year when they themselves were welcomed

to the college, that it is worth quoting one student's impression in full:

> 'I was involved with a powhiri during the college block. That was really good. I thought it was going to be really boring but then the kids all came along and they were really enthusiastic so I thought, "Well, this isn't so bad after all." There were quite a few people that didn't go to the powhiri because they thought, "Oh, Maori, boring", and nobody would understand what they're doing. I really enjoyed the powhiri and just the atmosphere that came from it was really good.'

Several students referred again to the powhiri at the beginning of the year. One student said how embarrassing and awkward it had been when the new students arrived and the organisers of the welcome were 'struggling to get people [ie last year's students], to come up on the day and participate'. They felt let down that people weren't ready to come and join the welcoming party. She went on to comment:

> 'We felt everyone this year got on so well [ie on the block course], that it's a pity we can't keep in touch so that next year when this comes up we will be able to make a more solid body.'

Five students in our interview sample were taking Maori subject study. One referred to the course not being in enough depth and having to be 'more than tokenism'. She would have liked particularly to talk about how to deal with racism in the classroom, and how Maori people think of Taha Maori. However, the students were appreciative of the chance to increase their Maori vocabulary and to know something of the myths and legends related to the Canterbury region. One referred to the problems of Christchurch students having little opportunity to use their knowledge immediately:

> 'I've learnt a lot of the protocol expected of a person visiting a Maori community, which has been useful. Well it has been stored in my mind. In Canterbury it isn't that useful and in this teachers college it isn't that useful yet, but I'm sure it will be.'

Students also spoke of the amount of Maori language included in the course - Maori lecturers talking both formally and informally in Maori - whereas 'other lecturers do not seem to see it as their responsibility'.

Only two other subjects were mentioned by students where they had gained knowledge of things Maori or the Maori language. The first was social studies where there had been some assistance with Maori pronunciation. The second was health. Two aspects of Maori health were mentioned - seeing the person as a whole and Maori reliance on belonging to the family.

SHOULD ALL TEACHERS TAKE A COURSE IN MAORI LANGUAGE?

The students in the interview sample were asked:

> *Do you think all teachers who are not native speakers of Maori, should take a course in Maori language?*

The student responses are summarised in Table 19.

Table 19

Desirability of teachers taking course in Maori language

Teachers should take course	Auckland N	Auckland %	Wellington N	Wellington %	Christchurch N	Christchurch %
Yes	16	39	19	56	20	63
No	23	56	14	41	11	34
No response	2	5	1	3	1	3
Total	41	100	34	100	32	100

One can only speculate on the reasons for the differences between colleges in the students' response to this question. It is interesting to note, however, that in Auckland, where there is the highest proportion of Maori students and Maori in the community, students were least likely to think teachers should take a course in Maori language. The reverse was true for Christchurch. Students who answered 'No' were not necessarily opposed to the idea of teachers learning Maori, but they were opposed to any suggestion of compulsion. The idea might be a good one but it should be the personal decision of the teacher and not forced on them.

Those who thought that teachers should take a course often suggested that they should only learn 'basic' Maori, such as numbers and counting and correct pronunciation, because it 'would come in handy in the classroom'. Most students implied that for teachers to learn Maori was a matter of expediency because, 'it is definitely going to be part of the schools in the future'. Rather fewer suggested that it was appropriate because, it is 'part of New Zealand culture' of the position of Maori as tangatawhenua of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

DO THE STUDENTS INTEND TO TAKE A COURSE IN MAORI LANGUAGE?

We also asked the students, regardless of whether they thought all teachers should take a course in Maori language, whether they intended to do so. Their responses are summarised in Table 20.

Table 20

Intentions of students to take a course in Maori language

Students intend to take course	Auckland N	Auckland %	Wellington N	Wellington %	Christchurch N	Christchurch %
Yes	23	56	27	79	20	62
No	15	37	4	12	11	34
Don't know	3	7	3	9	1	3
Total	41	100	34	100	32	100

Once again there are marked differences between colleges with Wellington students being considerably more likely than students in the other two colleges to say they intended to do so (79% in Wellington compared with 56% in Auckland and 62% in Christchurch.) In some cases the student response was influenced by what courses in Maori language they thought would be available at the college. There was uncertainty, particularly at Auckland, as to whether or not students could learn the language there. A few had expected to do so but now assumed they would have to do so at the university or polytech. Wellington and Christchurch students were more likely to think the opportunity was available at college through language classes although they also referred to courses at university and polytech. One Christchurch student went so far as to say that she wished now that she had taken a course in the Maori subject study instead of going to university because she had been so impressed with the Maori block course.

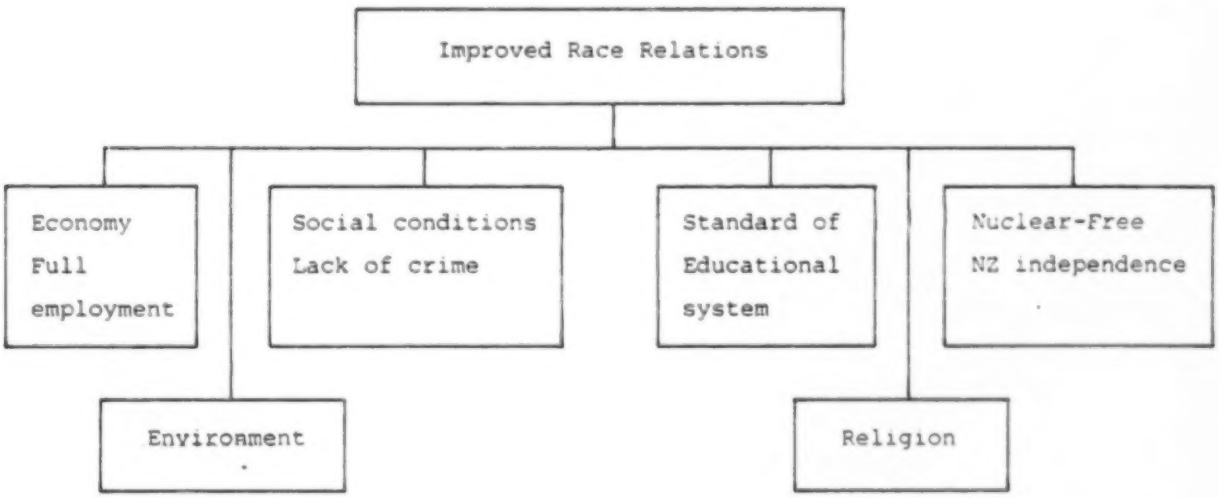
PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND THE WIDER SOCIAL CONTEXT

THE WIDER SOCIAL CONTEXT

We concluded the questionnaire with a series of questions designed to elicit student views on the strengths and weaknesses of New Zealand primary schools; student attitudes towards 'Tomorrows Schools'; and the kind of society students would like New Zealand to be in the year 2000. Our aim was to set the primary school in a broad social context. The student view of New Zealand the way they would like it in 2000 is portrayed diagrammatically in Diagram 10.

DIAGRAM 10

New Zealand in the Year 2000



Race Relations

The clearest message from the students' comments, accounting for well over a quarter of all their responses, expressed their wish that New Zealanders in the year 2000 would live in racial harmony. There were two aspects of this desire for improved race relations: either that New Zealand would become truly bicultural: or that we would all become one people - New Zealanders.

The students espousing biculturalism hoped New Zealand would be 'at peace with its bicultural society'. Others spoke of being 'rich in its culture and proud of its Maoritanga', or the need to promote Maori and Polynesian cultures. For some biculturalism implied bilingualism with 'every New Zealander speaking Maori as well as they can English'. One Maori student wrote:

> 'He Iwi Kotahi tatou. To have my culture and language on an equal status as European culture and language.'

A few students expressed disquiet with moves towards biculturalism hoping, for example, that in the year 2000 there would be 'no radicals to upset the peace':

> 'that we shouldn't have to start analysing the Treaty of Waitangi, the colour of our skin, and the colour of our neighbour's skin, it has never been a problem before.'

or

> 'New Zealand has resolved its current race paranoia and settled down to a more understanding, less hysterical dialogue.'

The word 'dialogue' suggests talk between two people, but the other group of students who hoped for improved race relations thought that this could best be achieved by, 'recognising everyone living here as New Zealanders regardless of race or religion'.

These students emphasise the multicultural rather than bicultural composition of our society. They also expressed the view that we would only be able to live at peace with each other if we submerged our cultural differences and became

> '... united in recognition of ourselves as New Zealand - encompassing all of its cultures in the creation of its own'.

A number of student comments suggested an inability to live with cultural diversity - a feeling that diversity was not a strength, but a threat.

The next three categories of comments all accounted for between 15 and 20% of the student responses, with the state of the economy being seen as the most important.

The Economy

The link between the economy, inflation and unemployment was pointed out by students, who believed that a high level of employment was the next most important goal for New Zealand in 2000.

Social Conditions

Improved social conditions were sometimes linked in students' comments with low unemployment figures. Some student comments also reflected disenchantment with a society and government that was too materialistic. The student ideal was a caring society with a low crime rate.

The Education System

Faith in the education system to redress social inequalities was expressed by a number of students who saw a goal for the year 2000 to be

> 'an effective education system from pre-school to tertiary levels, wherein people are given every chance to develop according to ability, free from restrictions of race, creed or wealth'.

The equity issues raised earlier in the questionnaire came to the fore in these later responses - an education system free of racism and sexism, where children from all socio-economic backgrounds would have equal opportunities. Other students referred to the need for higher standards of education and also a higher proportion of the population educated to higher levels:

> 'Has a high percentage of its population educated. Education is the key to success and understanding.'

Nuclear Free: New Zealand Independence

About 12% of students spoke of New Zealand being 'a leader in world peace', 'spearheading the world into a non-nuclear society' and 'being free of worry from any threat of war'. Several students would like the armed forces 'abolished'. One suggested that in the year 2000 she would like the country to be, 'a nuclear-free middle-class society'!

Several students linked being nuclear free with New Zealand 'standing on its own feet' and 'being independent of other countries to make their own decisions'. Others talked more broadly of the importance of international relations, being respected by other countries and acknowledging our responsibilities towards, and links with, our Pacific Island neighbours.

The Environment

The need for a pollution-free environment was mentioned by about 25 students. One lyrical student wrote that she hoped New Zealand would be:

'Forever immersed in rainbows and sunshine.'

Another more pragmatic simply hoped it would be 'chlorofluorocarbon free'.

Religion and other comments

About 25 of the 556 students surveyed also hoped that New Zealand in 2000 would be a country *'more Christian* in its values and attitudes'.

In a range of miscellaneous comments, students referred to a hope that appreciation of the arts had increased, our population hadn't increased, we had a cure for AIDS, we led the world in child health research and 'there is a decent government we can have faith in'.

NEW ZEALAND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

STUDENT ATTITUDES TO TOMORROW'S SCHOOLS

The students who entered colleges of education in 1989 are preparing to teach in an education system which is undergoing considerable change with the

restructuring of education administration under Tomorrow's Schools. We asked the students, before they entered college, what they thought the likely consequences of these changes will be for them as classroom teachers. Students were given the opportunity to list three changes and 87% of them listed at least one (Table 20). (It should be noted that few prospective students had read *Administering for Excellence*[22] before entering college).

Table 21

Student views of possible changes due to the implementation of Tomorrow's Schools

School changes	N	%
Teachers' terms and conditions of employment will change	185	35
Greater communication with parents/community	85	16
Parents/community will have more say in what happens at school - more power over system	57	11
Greater accountability of teachers	41	8
Change in budgets/resources (both more and less)	32	6
Equity issues affected	27	5
Loss of specialist services - psychological services - mainstreaming	9	2
Schools will become more businesslike - better *administrative* organisation	7	1
Other	79	15
All responses	522	

NOTE: This table is based upon the responses of 275 students.

As shown in Table 21, students were most conscious of likely changes to teachers' terms and conditions of employment. They felt that changes, which were mainly for the worse, could include:

- greater insecurity of employment - in particular no guarantees of

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22. The Report of the Task Force to Review Educational Administration, published by the Government Printer in 1988.

employment for beginning teachers;

- teachers being less likely to share resources, ideas etc.

- a higher standard of teaching required leading to more preparation, planning and pressure;

- more competition for jobs.

This last point was not always regarded as a bad thing; some students felt that competition would force teachers to achieve higher standards of teaching. Other benefits which they saw included getting rid of unsuitable teachers and a greater freedom for the classroom teacher to implement the curriculum.

Those students expecting greater communication between the school and the community, particularly parents, looked upon this positively, although students were not as positive about parents having more 'power' in the new system.

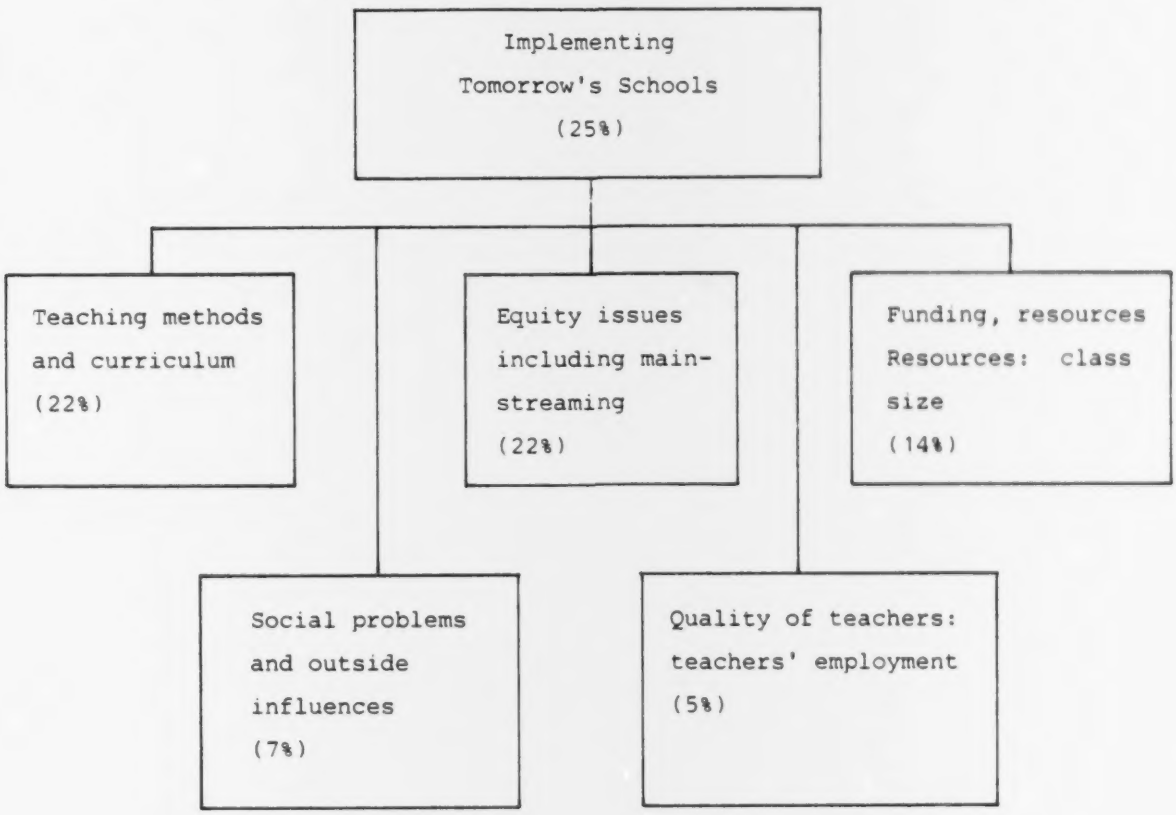
When we interviewed students six months later, we asked them whether there had been any mention in their courses of changes likely to be brought about because of Tomorrow's Schools. The majority of students said the issues had not been raised, except by a few individual lecturers in response to students' queries.

CHALLENGES FACING NEW ZEALAND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Within the broad social context discussed earlier in this section, what, in the view of prospective trainees, are the challenges facing New Zealand primary schcols, and what are the present strengths and weaknesses of our schools? Students were more likely to make statements about the strengths of New Zealand primary schools than they were about current weaknesses (641 'positive' responses cf 557 'negative'). One would expect prospective trainees to have a positive view of the school system. The fact that they have chosen to be teachers probably indicates that they themselves were reasonably successful pupils at school. Their view that schools have more strengths than weaknesses is also in line with the relatively small proportion of students who said they chose to teach because they believed 'the education system needs changing'. Diagram 11 summarises the students' views diagrammatically.

DIAGRAM 11

The Challenges Facing New Zealand Primary Schools



STRENGTHS OF NZ PRIMARY SCHOOLS

(641 responses)

Teaching methods and curriculum (38%)

Biculturalism: multiculturalism (15%)

Quality of teachers (10%)

Resources: funding (9%)

Community: parental involvement (7%)

Recognition of individual differences: mainstreaming (7%)

WEAKNESSES OF NZ PRIMARY SCHOOLS

(557 responses)

Resources and funding: class size (24%)

Teaching methods and curriculum (19%)

Recognition of individual differences (19%)

Equity issues (14%)

Quality of teachers (11%)

Community and parental involvement (6%)

School Reform

In the short term trainees were quite clear that the most important challenges facing the school system will be the implementation of Tomorrow's Schools, particularly the ways by which communities accept and manage their responsibilities. Comments about changes under Tomorrow's Schools accounted for about 25% of all student responses.

Teaching Methods and Curriculum

About a quarter of the student responses also referred to improved teaching methods and curriculum content as being an important challenge for primary schools. However, when commenting on schools' current strengths and weaknesses more than a third of the student responses said teaching methods and curriculum were strengths in New Zealand schools. Fewer than 20% of the responses referred to current weaknesses in teaching methods and curriculum. Issues related to teaching methods and the curriculum raised were:

* Curriculum for a changing society.
  - technology
  - employment
  - environment
  - leisure.
* Curriculum appropriate for all ethnic and social groups.
* Teaching for success rather than failure.
* preparing children for future learning.

Equity Issues

Consistent with the student view that New Zealand in the year 2000 needs to be a society with improved race relations, equity issues, in the view of prospective trainees, ranked second equal of the important challenges facing primary schools. However, trainees also believed that one of the most positive things about primary schools is the way equity issues, particularly the importance of biculturalism and multiculturalism, are handled in the schools. Students spoke of the development of Taha Maori, and of schools being more culturally sensitive and aware than they used to be. There were occasional references to bilingualism and immersion classes being set up for children coming out of Nga Kohanga Reo. On the negative side, prospective

trainees also saw weaknesses in the way schools were currently handling equity issues. This was attributed largely to schools being too monocultural, with children from ethnic minorities and poorer backgrounds failing in the system.

Funding, Resources: Class Size

The need for adequate funding and resources for schools was seen as an important challenge. When students referred to school weaknesses, about a quarter of their responses referred to problems of underfunding, particularly in terms of high pupil/teacher ratios. High pupil/ teacher ratios were seen as a major factor contributing to the inability of schools to cater adequately for children with special needs. On the other hand, about 10% of the students' responses suggested that the way primary schools were funded and equipped before recent changes in government policy was one of their strengths.

Community Involvement

When discussing present school strengths and weaknesses, fewer than 10% of the student comments, either positive or negative, referred to community and parental involvement. This lack of comment is interesting in terms of the importance students attach to parents and the community in the school reforms.

Quality of Teachers

The quality of the teachers themselves came in for relatively little comment from students. When discussing both the strengths and weaknesses of schools about 10% of student comments referred to the quality of teaching, conditions of service and other staffing matters. About 5% of student responses suggested that these issues were also among the challenges facing schools.

CONCLUSION

This report is based on the first phase of a longitudinal study. The first year has been necessarily exploratory. We have entitled the report 'Windows on Teacher Education', and we have taken a glimpse through various frames; the view is limited and incomplete. This is partly because of the length of time it takes a researcher to absorb the 'culture' of a college. However, we think there is merit in describing the view from the outside looking in, as well as those on the inside reflecting on the view from their perspective.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

From the outset we recognised the need to set this study in the wider context of social and economic issues. There are a number of contemporary issues in New Zealand society which are having an impact on our study, particularly the issue of equity. Clear patterns emerged when we compared the attitudes of the intakes at each college to various issues of equity. Wellington students before they arrived at college had what would be considered more 'liberal' views than the other colleges. Auckland and Christchurch students were generally either less aware, or less sympathetic to, equity issues. Our research does not permit us to do more than speculate on the reasons for these differences. Are they a reflection of differences among the communities from which the students are selected? Or are the selection panels for the three colleges looking for different qualities in the candidates they select? Or is it some mixture of both?

Six months into the course differences are emerging between the students' perceptions of how the different colleges handle these equity issues. Wellington students were more likely to think that all of these issues had been raised in their course than the students at the other two colleges. But students at all three colleges felt that, when raised, the issues were often dealt with somewhat superficially.

Approximately one-third of the students interviewed in each college professed to have become more open-minded about equity issues, particularly biculturalism and multiculturalism. The attitudes of a few Pakeha students in particular had become more negative because they believed the colleges were pushing the Maori perspective too hard.

The information we have presented was gathered from students before entry to college and after six months' experience of the course. With more than two years more of the course to complete, it is obviously too early to draw conclusions. The interest will be in mapping students' attitudes and seeing to what extent any changes are in the direction of the colleges' stated objectives.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Some student answers have forced us to add a 'global' layer to our original research model. Students compared the New Zealand education system with that of other countries, making us realise that some of the attitudes expressed are 'culture-bound' and dominated by Pakeha cultural values. For example, the students generally had a strong notion of 'individuality', treating children as individuals. The broader social goals of responsibility to the group were much less likely to be mentioned than the needs of individual children. They also thought learning should be 'fun'. Some of these notions would not be shared by other cultures. It is not only the students whose views are influenced by these ideas. We as researchers are also influenced by similar assumptions in analysing their experience and judging their success at college.

World trends in teacher education are also having their effect on New Zealand, for example the drive to make teaching a graduate profession; a renewed emphasis on individual competence and upgrading personal skills in a time of increased unemployment; and user-pays, all of which have relevance to our study.

EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

Before entering college students commonly believed that current educational reforms would have an effect on their future as a teacher either because of changes in the appointment and working conditions of teachers, or because of increased community and parental involvement. Six months into the course they did not feel that these issues had been addressed in any of their college courses, other than by casual references. The way students are prepared to cope with changes in the school system is a theme we will pursue in later stages of the study.

PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY OF STUDENTS

Our analysis is confirming the importance of personal biography in shaping students' views and their reaction to the course. If the colleges do recognise that the students have a 'history' which influences their experience of the course they do not always, in the view of students, act on it. In particular they are not always successful in treating the students as individual learners, taking into account the students' backgrounds in terms of

- age (mature students)
- experience (work and family)
- parenting
- university qualifications
- skills and abilities.

It is important to emphasise that students start the course believing they already possess most of the personal qualities and abilities necessary to make a good teacher. This should be the basis for interaction between staff and individual students so that students' views can be measured against college beliefs as to the qualities and abilities needed to be a successful teacher.

TRANSITION TO TERTIARY EDUCATION

This study needs to be seen in the context of transition from secondary to tertiary education. And, in the case of graduates, of transition from one tertiary institution to another. There appears to be an awkward join between students' earlier experience as senior secondary students and their first contact with a tertiary institution. All three colleges include in their official aims a commitment to developing the intellect of students. However,

six months into the course, many students found that it lacked intellectual challenge. Students taking university courses invariably found the college less intellectually stimulating and demanding (although there was usually plenty of 'busy work'). But they were not alone in this. Many school leavers also considered the courses at the college of education less intellectually demanding than those they had experienced at secondary school.

There may be an inherent conflict in the fact that students expect to be intellectually challenged but also want courses that are practically based in terms of their future as classroom teachers of primary-aged children. Furthermore, limited intellectual challenge does not always mean students are dissatisfied. A number of those attending university as well as the college, commented on the fact that they enjoyed the balance between the two. They were enjoying the more practical nature of the college course and the fact that by and large it was more geared to their chosen vocation of teaching. They also enjoyed being part of a group of students all preparing for the same career.

A second cause of tension may relate to the problems of applying subjects studied at a higher education level to young children in primary schools, particularly if the view is held that you can only make a teacher out of a well-educated adult and that in order to raise the standard of teaching in primary schools, it is necessary to raise the level of specialist subject study among trainees.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

The perennial issue of the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education was apparent as soon as we started interviewing students. Most students we talked to had a strong commitment to train as teachers and wanted to get started straight away. For many, early experiences in schools was the main way they saw themselves making a start in 'learning how to teach'. When they entered college most did not have a coherent theory of teaching (some indeed were unaware that there was such a thing as pedogogical theory) to which they could link their teaching practice. The issue is how to capitalise the students' initial enthusiasm for teaching by providing early hands-on experience while at the same time developing in students an analytical, evaluative attitude towards learning and teaching which will encourage them to become reflective classroom teachers.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment has turned out to be a much more complex issue than we had anticipated. For the purposes of this study we will have to isolate and concentrate on those issues which focus on student concerns. Issues which have emerged so far are:

* The need or wish of students to have both formative and summative assessment: formative assessment to help them know where they as individuals are at any given time in terms of their training as a teacher and to act on that knowledge; and summative assessment given to recognise their effort and achievements on the course, something which is seen as necessary for when they finish their training and are competing for jobs.

* Is there a clear distinction made in the college by lecturers between the two kinds of assessment and is the difference clearly articulated?

* What are current assessment procedures and are they meeting student needs?

* Does the way students are assessed in college act as a model for how they will assess their own pupils?

* Development of students' capacity to assess themselves.

STUDENT/STAFF RELATIONSHIPS: AN INTERACTIVE PROCESS

This study focuses on the students' experience as they perceive it. Many factors impinge on this experience. A crucial one is the personality and skills of individual lecturers, but the relationship between students and lecturers is an interactive process - not a one-way street. Constraints of time and money mean that we are not likely to be able to gather much data from staff about their view of our student cohort. However, we do not wish to suggest that if only particular courses or lecturers were to change all would be well. Lecturers can no doubt point to negative attitudes on the part of students or limitations in their abilities which contribute to the fact that not all students will make successful beginning teachers.

COLLABORATION WITH THE COLLEGES

The ultimate goal of the research project must be to improve the process of teacher education, firstly by describing the experience of students in training and secondly by identifying areas where change should be considered. Staff at the colleges need to be persuaded that the reasons for change are compelling. Regular feedback of data from the study and consultation with the staff are an important part of this process. We have been pleased with the support which we have received from college staff but we have had problems in achieving a collaborative research style. This is largely because of the full and complex nature of college timetables and the general busyness of lecturers.

Colleges are also caught up with their own reviews and evaluations and it is difficult to feed information back fast enough and in a manner likely to influence changes already being put in place. Staff changes, particularly in Christchurch, also meant that comments one might have made about particular lecturers or courses were quickly out of date. Carrying out research in a period of rapid change is both exciting and frustrating. We would like to see more of an ongoing dialogue established with each of the colleges, not only to present the data we have collected but also to discuss it in the context of the issues which have already emerged and which we will continue to explore.

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